K

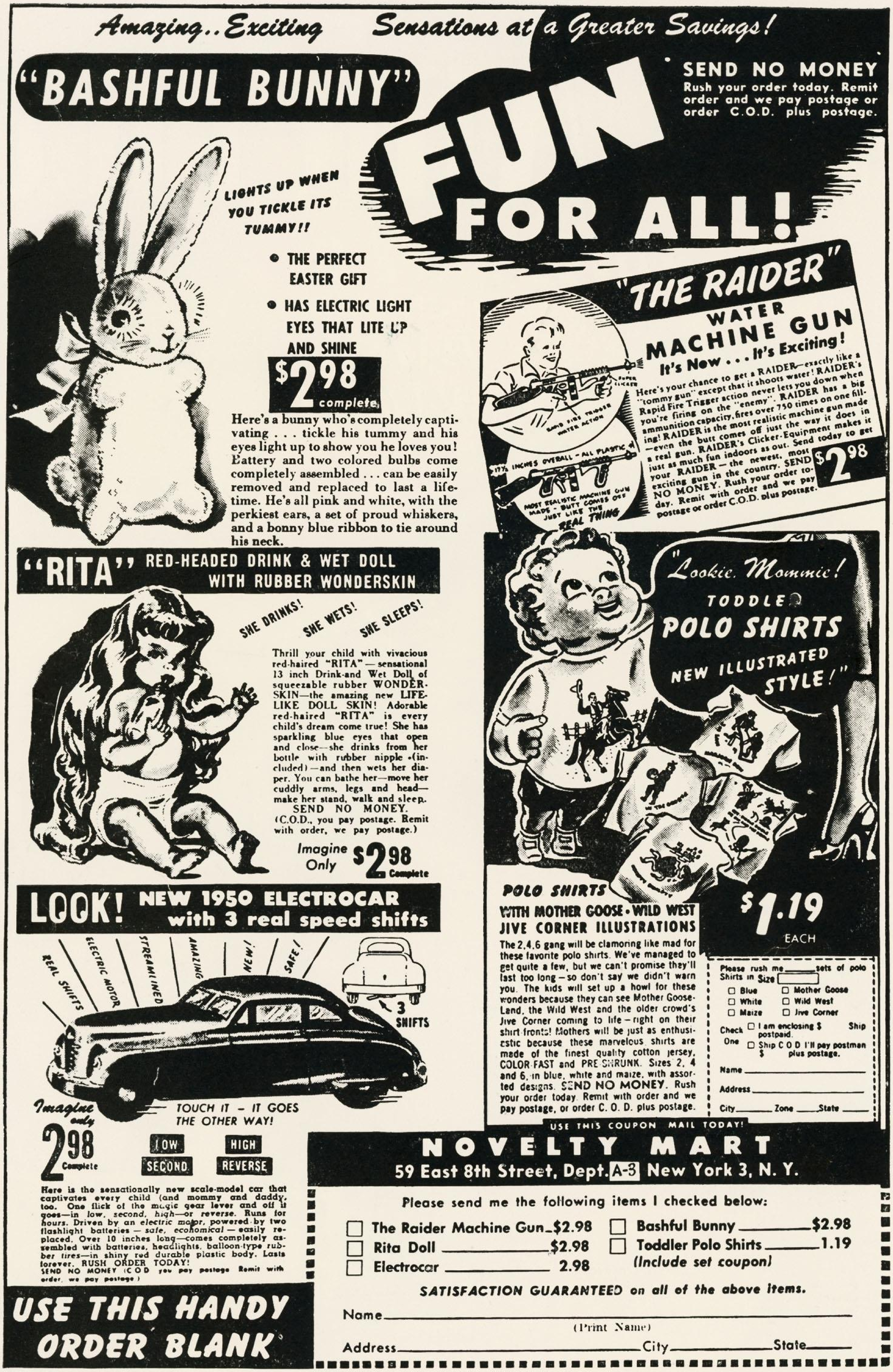
Miss America

10¢
MAR.

THREE LOVES HAVE I!

STARRING AMERICA'S ROMANTIC FAVORITE:

PATSY WALKER


LIGHTS UP WHEN YOU TICKLE ITS TUMMY!!
SHE DRINKS!
SHE WETS!
SHE SLEEPS!
RAPID FIRE TRIGGER WATER ACTION
17½ INCHES OVERALL — ALL PLASTIC
MOST REALISTIC MACHINE GUN MADE — BUTT COMES OFF JUST LIKE THE REAL THING
REAL SHIFTS
ELECTRIC MOTOR
STREAMLINED
AMAZING
NEW!
SAFE!
3 SHIFTS

Amazing.. Exciting Sensations at a Greater Savings!

"BASHFUL BUNNY"

FUN FOR ALL!

SEND NO MONEY
Rush your order today. Remit order and we pay postage or order C.O.D. plus postage.

- THE PERFECT EASTER GIFT
- HAS ELECTRIC LIGHT EYES THAT LITE UP AND SHINE

$2.98 complete

Here's a bunny who's completely captivating . . . tickle his tummy and his eyes light up to show you he loves you! Battery and two colored bulbs come completely assembled . . . can be easily removed and replaced to last a lifetime. He's all pink and white, with the perkiest ears, a set of proud whiskers, and a bonny blue ribbon to tie around his neck.

"THE RAIDER" WATER MACHINE GUN

It's New . . . It's Exciting!

Here's your chance to get a RAIDER—exactly like a "tommy gun" except that it shoots water! RAIDER's Rapid Fire Trigger action never lets you down when you're firing on the "enemy". RAIDER has a big ammunition capacity, fires over 750 times on one filling! RAIDER is the most realistic machine gun made —even the butt comes off just the way it does in a real gun. RAIDER's Clicker-Equipment makes it just as much fun indoors as out. Send today to get your RAIDER — the newest, most exciting gun in the country. SEND NO MONEY. Rush your order today. Remit with order and we pay postage or order C.O.D. plus postage.

$2.98

"RITA" RED-HEADED DRINK & WET DOLL WITH RUBBER WONDERSKIN

Thrill your child with vivacious red-haired "RITA"—sensational 13 inch Drink-and Wet Doll of squeezable rubber WONDERSKIN—the amazing new LIFE-LIKE DOLL SKIN! Adorable red-haired "RITA" is every child's dream come true! She has sparkling blue eyes that open and close—she drinks from her bottle with rubber nipple (included)—and then wets her diaper. You can bathe her—move her cuddly arms, legs and head—make her stand, walk and sleep.
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(C.O.D., you pay postage. Remit with order, we pay postage.)

Imagine Only **$2.98 Complete**

"Lookie, Mommie! TODDLER POLO SHIRTS NEW ILLUSTRATED STYLE!"

POLO SHIRTS WITH MOTHER GOOSE · WILD WEST JIVE CORNER ILLUSTRATIONS

The 2,4,6 gang will be clamoring like mad for these favorite polo shirts. We've managed to get quite a few, but we can't promise they'll last too long — so don't say we didn't warn you. The kids will set up a howl for these wonders because they can see Mother Goose-Land, the Wild West and the older crowd's Jive Corner coming to life — right on their shirt fronts! Mothers will be just as enthusiastic because these marvelous shirts are made of the finest quality cotton jersey, COLOR-FAST and PRE-SHRUNK. Sizes 2, 4 and 6, in blue, white and maize, with assorted designs. SEND NO MONEY. Rush your order today. Remit with order and we pay postage, or order C. O. D. plus postage.

$1.19 EACH

Please rush me ______ sets of polo Shirts in Size ☐
☐ Blue ☐ Mother Goose
☐ White ☐ Wild West
☐ Maize ☐ Jive Corner
Check One ☐ I am enclosing $ Ship postpaid.
☐ Ship C O D I'll pay postman $ plus postage.
Name ______________________
Address ______________________
City ________ Zone ______ State ______

LOOK! NEW 1950 ELECTROCAR with 3 real speed shifts

TOUCH IT – IT GOES THE OTHER WAY!

Imagine only **2.98 Complete**

LOW SECOND HIGH REVERSE

Here is the sensationally new scale-model car that captivates every child (and mommy and daddy, too. One flick of the magic gear lever and off it goes—in *low, second, high*—or *reverse*. Runs for hours. Driven by an *electric motor*, powered by two flashlight batteries — *safe, economical* — easily replaced. Over 10 inches long—comes completely assembled with batteries, headlights, balloon-type rubber tires—in shiny red durable plastic body. Lasts forever. RUSH ORDER TODAY!
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USE THIS HANDY ORDER BLANK

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59 East 8th Street, Dept. A-3 New York 3, N. Y.

Please send me the following items I checked below:
☐ The Raider Machine Gun $2.98 ☐ Bashful Bunny $2.98
☐ Rita Doll $2.98 ☐ Toddler Polo Shirts 1.19
☐ Electrocar 2.98 *(Include set coupon)*

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED on all of the above items.

Name ______________________
(Print Name)
Address ______________ City ______________ State ______

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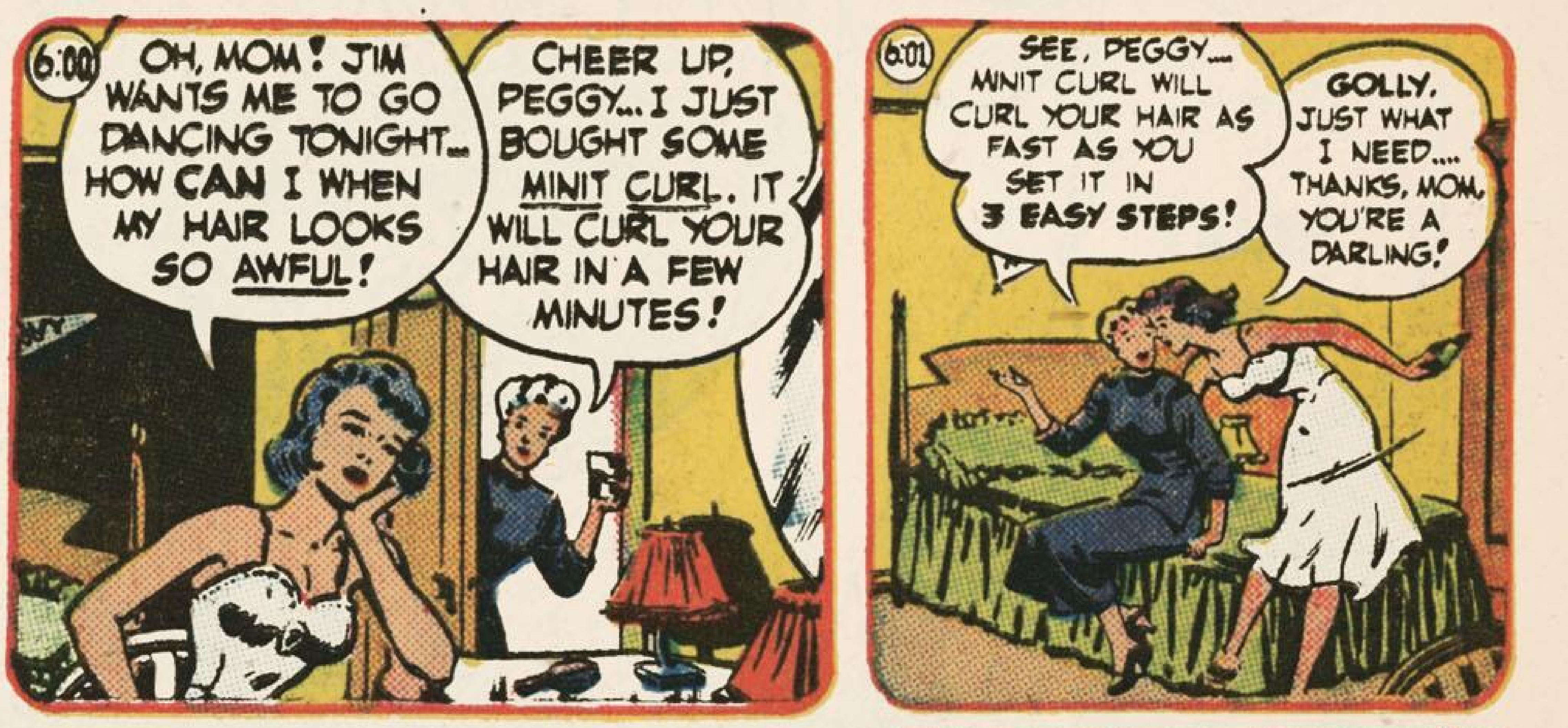
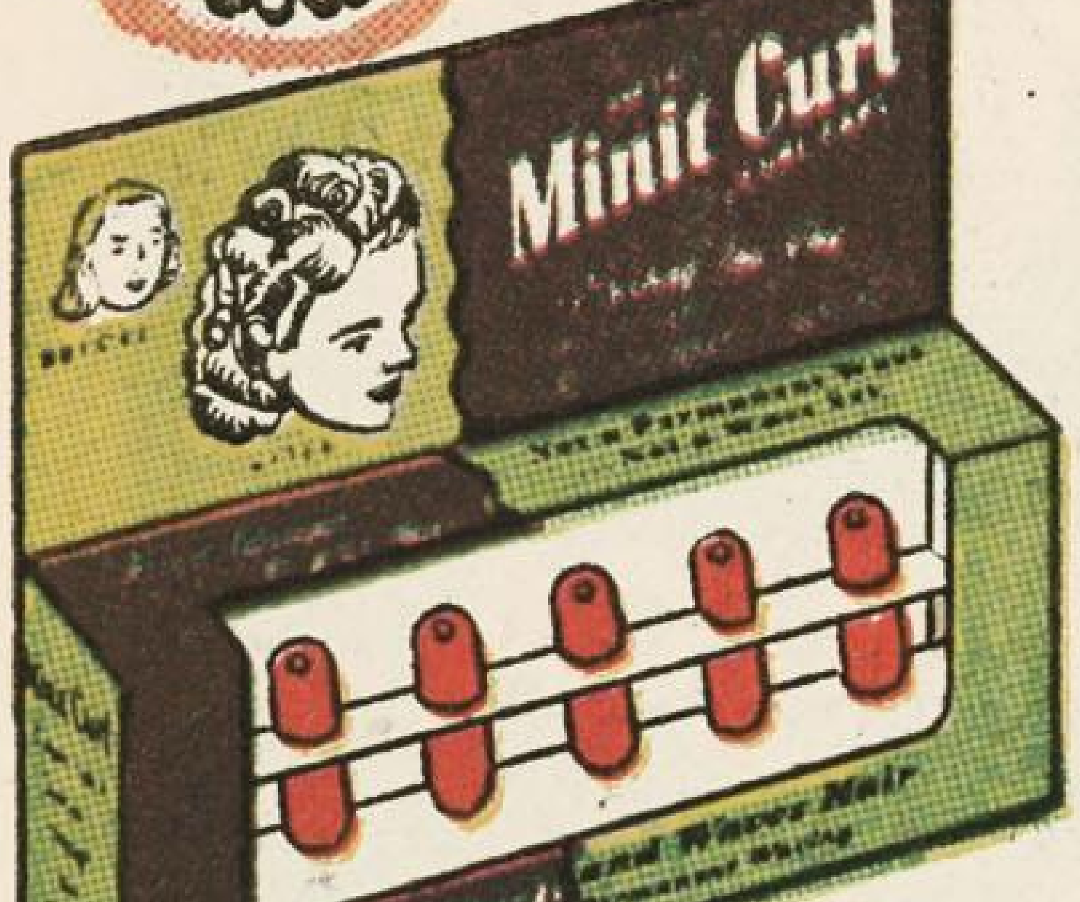
AMAZING NEW SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY

CURLS and WAVES HAIR IN MINUTES without PERMANENT WAVING

BEFORE
AFTER


6:00
OH, MOM! JIM WANTS ME TO GO DANCING TONIGHT... HOW CAN I WHEN MY HAIR LOOKS SO AWFUL!
CHEER UP, PEGGY... I JUST BOUGHT SOME MINIT CURL. IT WILL CURL YOUR HAIR IN A FEW MINUTES!
6:01
SEE, PEGGY... MINIT CURL WILL CURL YOUR HAIR AS FAST AS YOU SET IT IN 3 EASY STEPS!
GOLLY, JUST WHAT I NEED.... THANKS, MOM. YOU'RE A DARLING!



- NO MACHINERY
- NO WAITING
- NOT A WAVE SET

MARLENE'S

Minit Curl

CURL-CAPS

QUICK FACTS

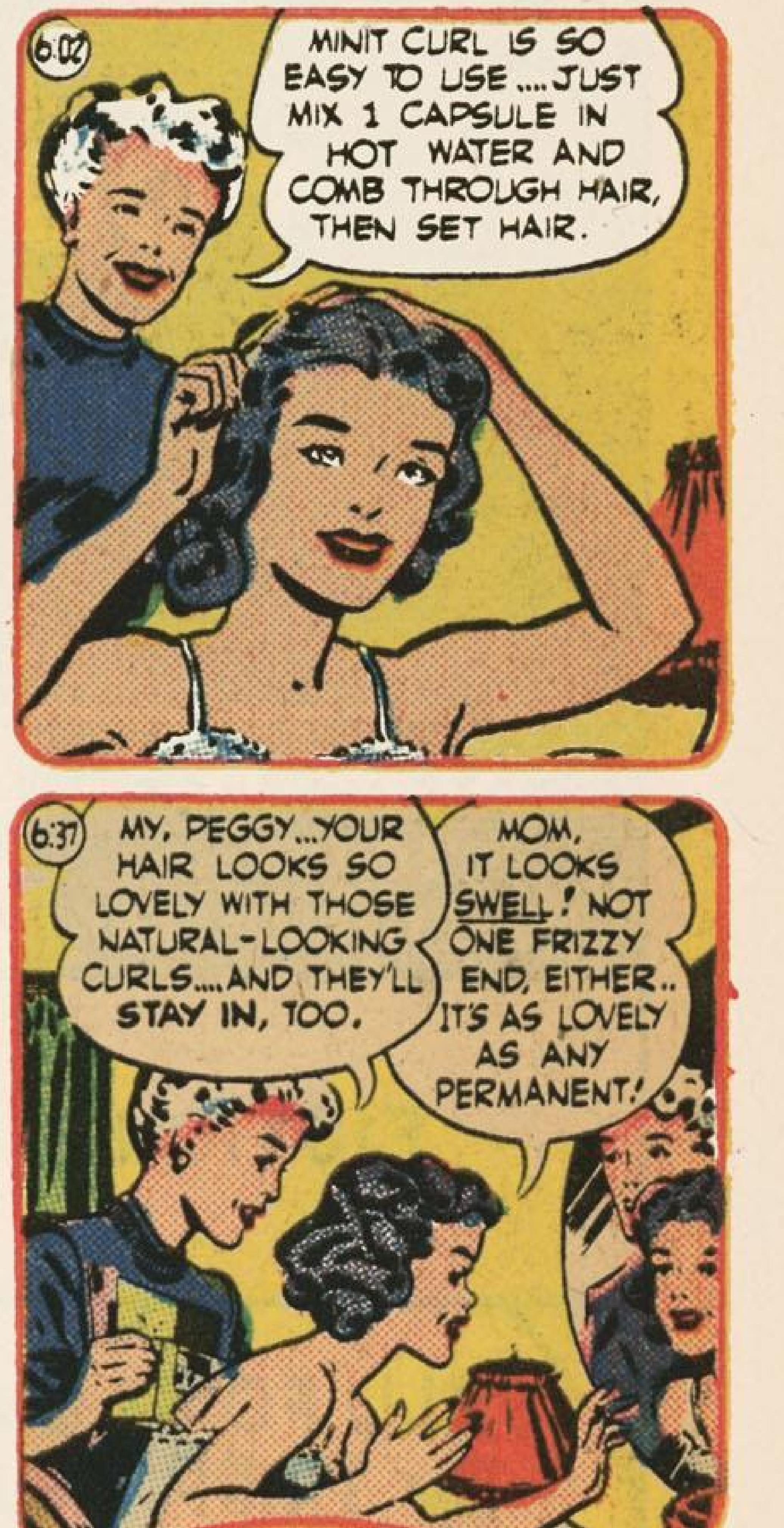
- SAFE for all types, texture of Hair, even dyed, bleached.
- Curls, waves new short hair cuts that are hard to permanent.
- Leaves hair wonderfully easy to manage.
- One capsule makes enough solution to curl several heads of hair.

IN MINUTES, you get glamorous waves and curls that suit you best . . . a halo of soft ringlets or loose, natural-looking waves as lovely as any permament! Marlene's MINIT CURL is as easy and simple as combing your hair . . . but the waves STAY IN. With MINIT CURL there's no fear of split ends; no dry, brittle fuzzy hair.

The more you use MINIT CURL the longer your wave lasts because MINIT CURL conditions your hair . . . encourages each strand to acquire the lustrous, natural curl you have always dreamed of having.

Marlene's MINIT CURL $1.25 PLUS TAX

LASTS FOR MONTHS


6:02
MINIT CURL IS SO EASY TO USE.... JUST MIX 1 CAPSULE IN HOT WATER AND COMB THROUGH HAIR, THEN SET HAIR.
6:37
MY, PEGGY...YOUR HAIR LOOKS SO LOVELY WITH THOSE NATURAL-LOOKING CURLS....AND THEY'LL STAY IN, TOO.
MOM, IT LOOKS SWELL! NOT ONE FRIZZY END, EITHER.. IT'S AS LOVELY AS ANY PERMANENT!

GEE, IT MAKES MY HAIR LOOK PRETTY TOO!

Yes, MINIT CURL gives children's soft, fine hair a marvelous curl; conditions as it curls.

LATER
GOSH, PEGGY... I'VE NEVER SEEN YOUR HAIR LOOK SO SOFT AND WONDERFUL!
RICHARD MARTIN FLETCHER

Get MINIT CURL at Your Drug or Department Store, or

MAIL THIS COUPON NOW

Marlene, Inc., Dept. 138
205 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 1, Illinois

Rush my Marlene's MINIT CURL CAPS. On arrival I will pay postman $1.25 plus 20% tax and C.O.D. postage on guarantee I may return remaining capsules for my money back if not delighted after using just once. ($1.50 enclosed, you pay postage.)

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Address__________

City__________ Zone_____ State_____

SAFE: Laboratory Tested and Approved. Minit Curl contains no harsh chemicals like Alum or Sulphur.

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ROMANCE
FUN
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IF YOU LIKE "MISS AMERICA", YOU'LL GO FOR "JUNIOR MISS"!!

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FICTION

Miss America

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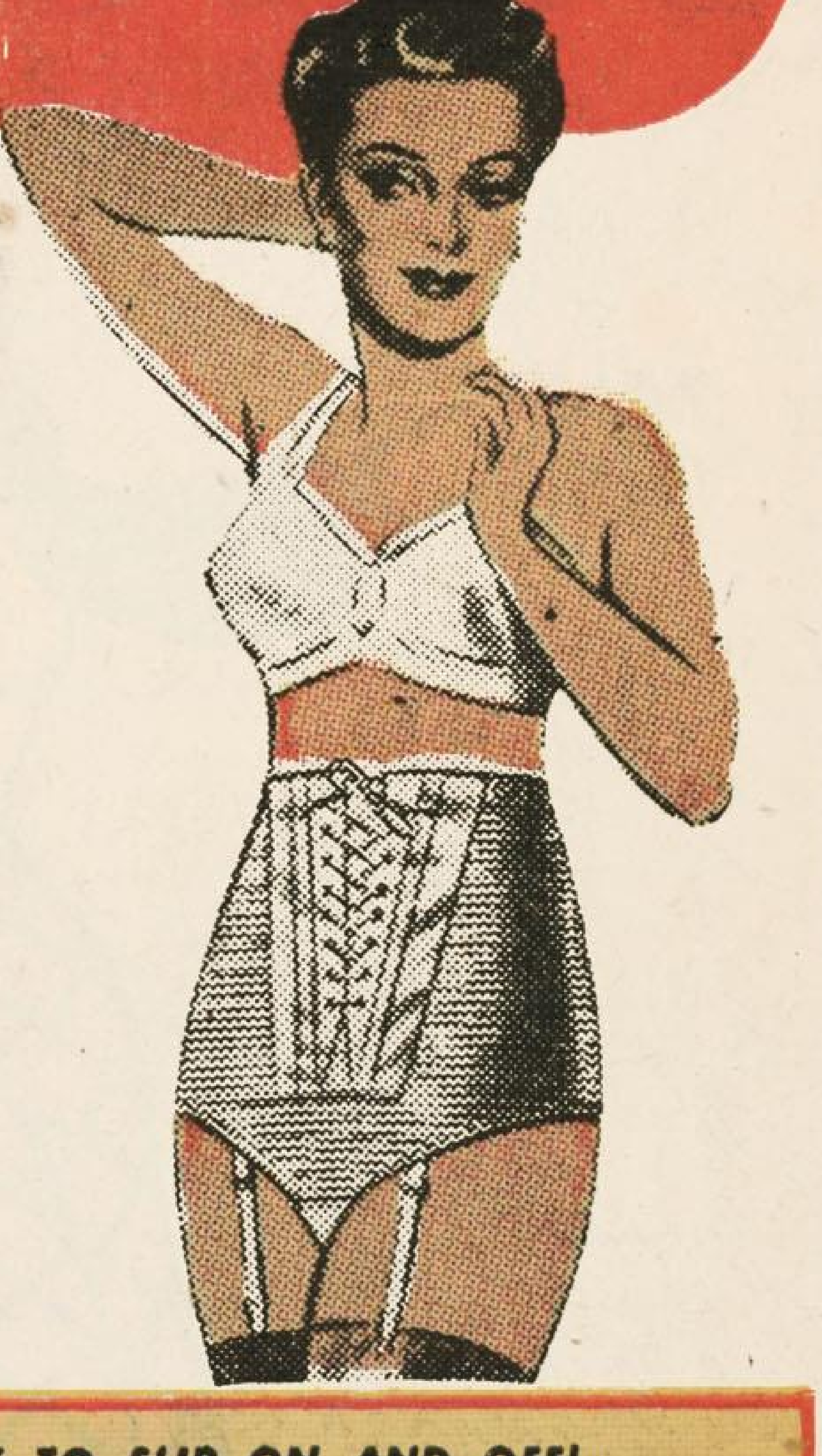
NOW I FEEL LIKE SIXTEEN AGAIN!



"Droopy posture gone . . . low-down feeling banished . . . the energy of a young girl recaptured. . . . **Tum-E-Lift** makes me feel like a new woman again!"—such are the phrases in the voluntary testimonials we constantly receive. For example: **"I like my Tum-E-Lift . . . I feel like 16 again and I am 37 now,"** says Mrs. A. S. of Detroit.

So don't let waistline bulge and a tired back get you down! Lift up that dragging, sagging abdomen with a **Tum-E-Lift,** the controlling, slenderizing supporter-belt which brings invigorating mid-section comfort.

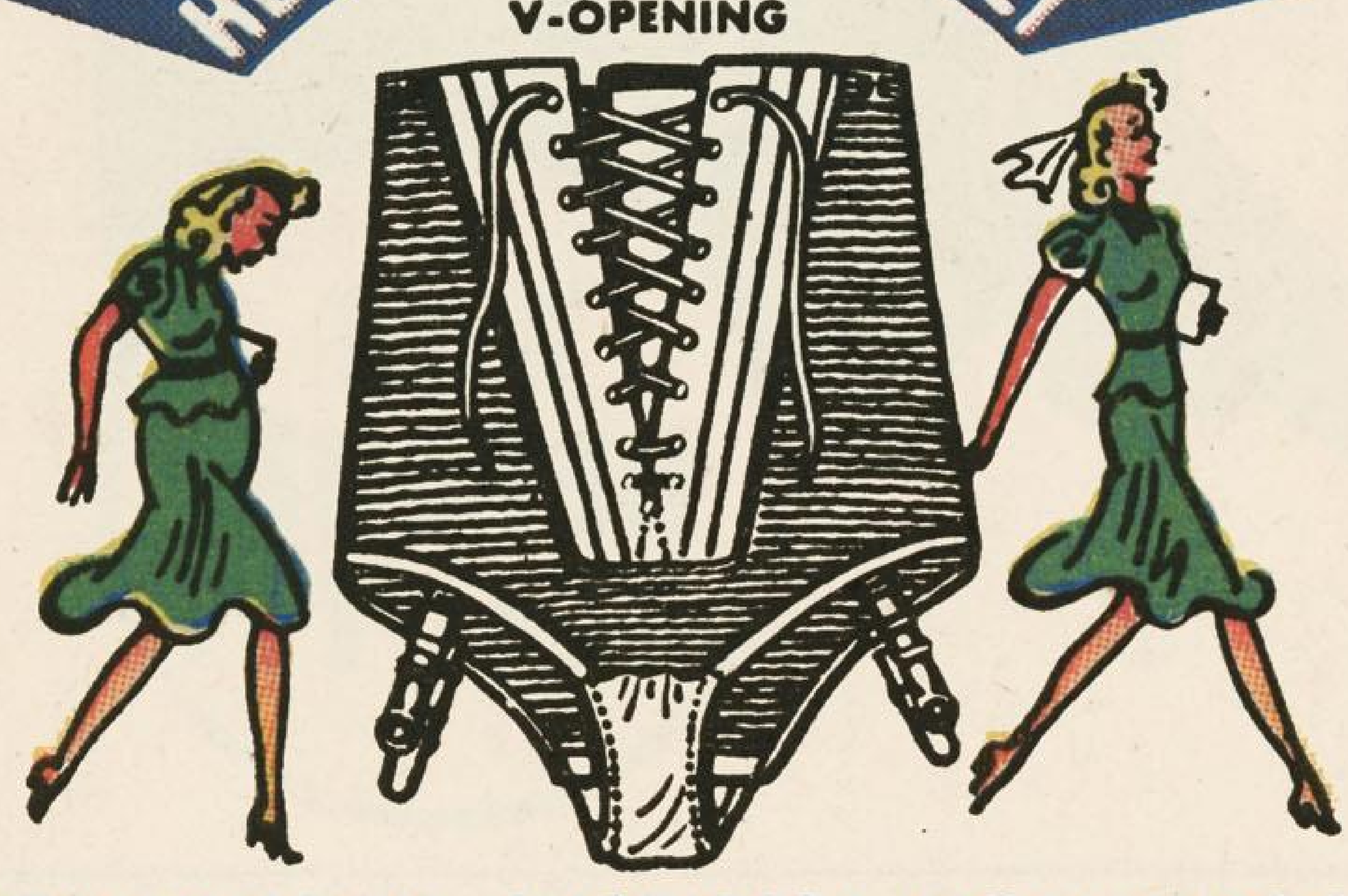
You Will Feel New, Too!

Because you'll find **Tum-E-Lift** a pleasure to wear. You'll rejoice in its energizing all-day support. Mrs. C. L. of Arizona writes: **"I can't tell you how much your Tum-E-Lift has meant to me. It made a lot of difference in my figure, and I feel great comfort wearing it. Don't think I'll be able to do without it again."** . . . Mail coupon below for your **Tum-E-Lift** today ON 10 DAYS TRIAL and see for yourself how it will make **you** feel and look fresher and younger at once!

The Flat Front

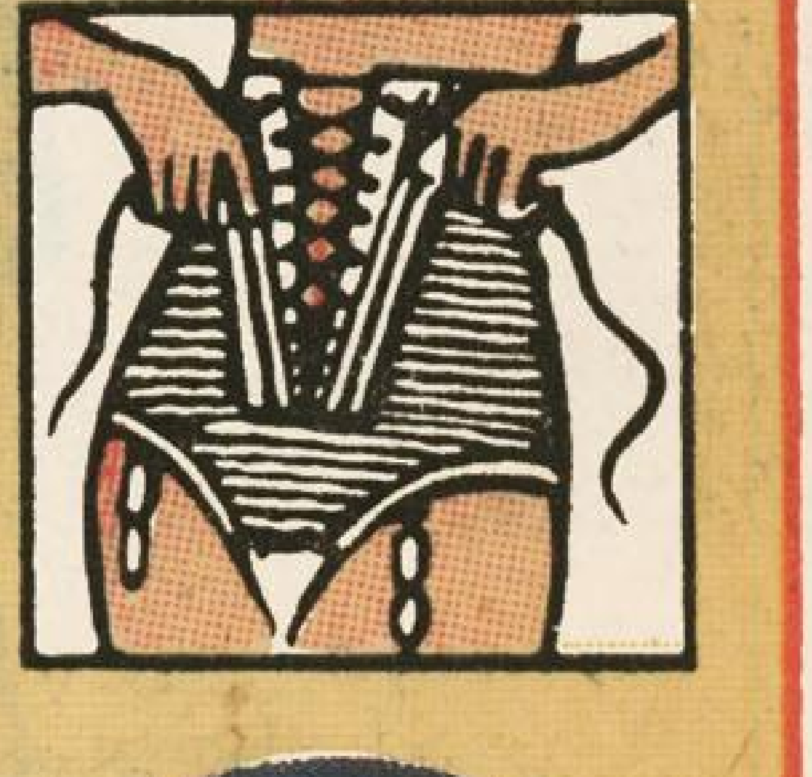
"TUM-E-LIFT" HEALTH SUPPORTER BELT

NOTE V-OPENING



EASY TO SLIP ON AND OFF!

WITH FRONT LACES FOR PERFECT ADJUSTMENT



Tum-E-Lift is scientifically constructed to provide perfect comfort, perfect support. Lightweight — amazingly strong! Adjustable front panels, of lustrous rayon satin, control your figure the way you want it —merely tighten or loosen the laces—and presto! your mid-section is reshaped to a slenderized, beautiful flat-fronted posture—and with energy-giving comfort!

Only $3.98

HOLLYWOOD INSPIRED! HOLLYWOOD DESIGNED!

NEW IMPROVED MODEL

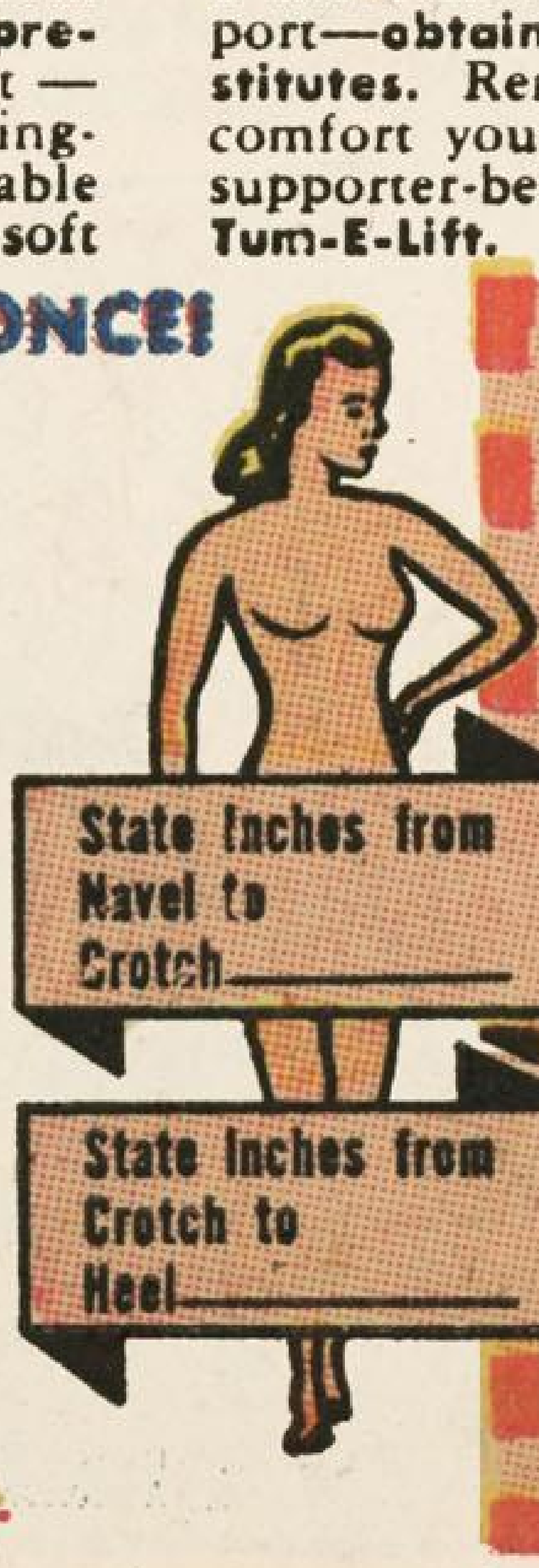
Here's the secret of **Tum-E-Lift** — it's made of 2-way s-t-r-e-t-c-h—a light-weight "miracle" cloth that's powerfully strong. **Washing actually preserves its strength.** Long metal ribs in front — short ones in back—absolutely prevent "riding-up," curling, rolling, or bulging. Detachable garters. Color: Nude. Detachable crotch of soft Celanese for personal convenience. Genuine **Tum-E-Lift** is an exclusive, slenderizing abdominal support—**obtainable only from us — accept no substitutes.** Remember, you get the same fit and comfort you would expect from a made-to-order supporter-belt costing 2 to 3 times the price of **Tum-E-Lift.**

LOOK INCHES SLIMMER AT ONCE!

Just like magic. **Tum-E-Lift** smooths and lifts your bulging "tummy," lending prompt and comfortable support to weakened abdominal muscles. You look inches slimmer **instantly.** Yet, **Tum-E-Lift** is flexible—it allows complete freedom of movement. Bend, stoop, walk, sit, recline—this marvelous support is **always** delightfully comfortable. Yes, the vitality and comfort you get from **Tum-E-Lift** will actually increase from day to day.

SEND NO MONEY. For thrilling satisfaction, try the slenderizing **Tum-E-Lift** on 10-DAY TRIAL. Send no money — just mail coupon. Pay postman $3.98 plus few cents postage when package arrives. If **Tum-E-Lift** doesn't make "a world of difference" send it back and your $3.98 will be promptly refunded.

S. J. WEGMAN CO., Dept. A
9 East 45th Street, New York 17, N.Y.


State Inches from Navel to Crotch
State Inches from Crotch to Heel

FREE TRIAL COUPON

S. J. WEGMAN CO., Dept. A
9 East 45th Street, New York 17, N.Y.

Send me for 10 days' approval . . . genuine **Hollywood Tum-E-Lift Supporters.** I will pay postman **$3.98** each plus postage. ($4.98 if waist size 40 or over.) If not 100% satisfied, I may return it for refund. I enclose dimensions asked for in picture above. My present waist measure is________Hips are________(Waist sizes from 22 inches.) Height is________I am accustomed to wearing a ☐ long, short ☐ girdie.

Send also________extra crotches at 59c each.

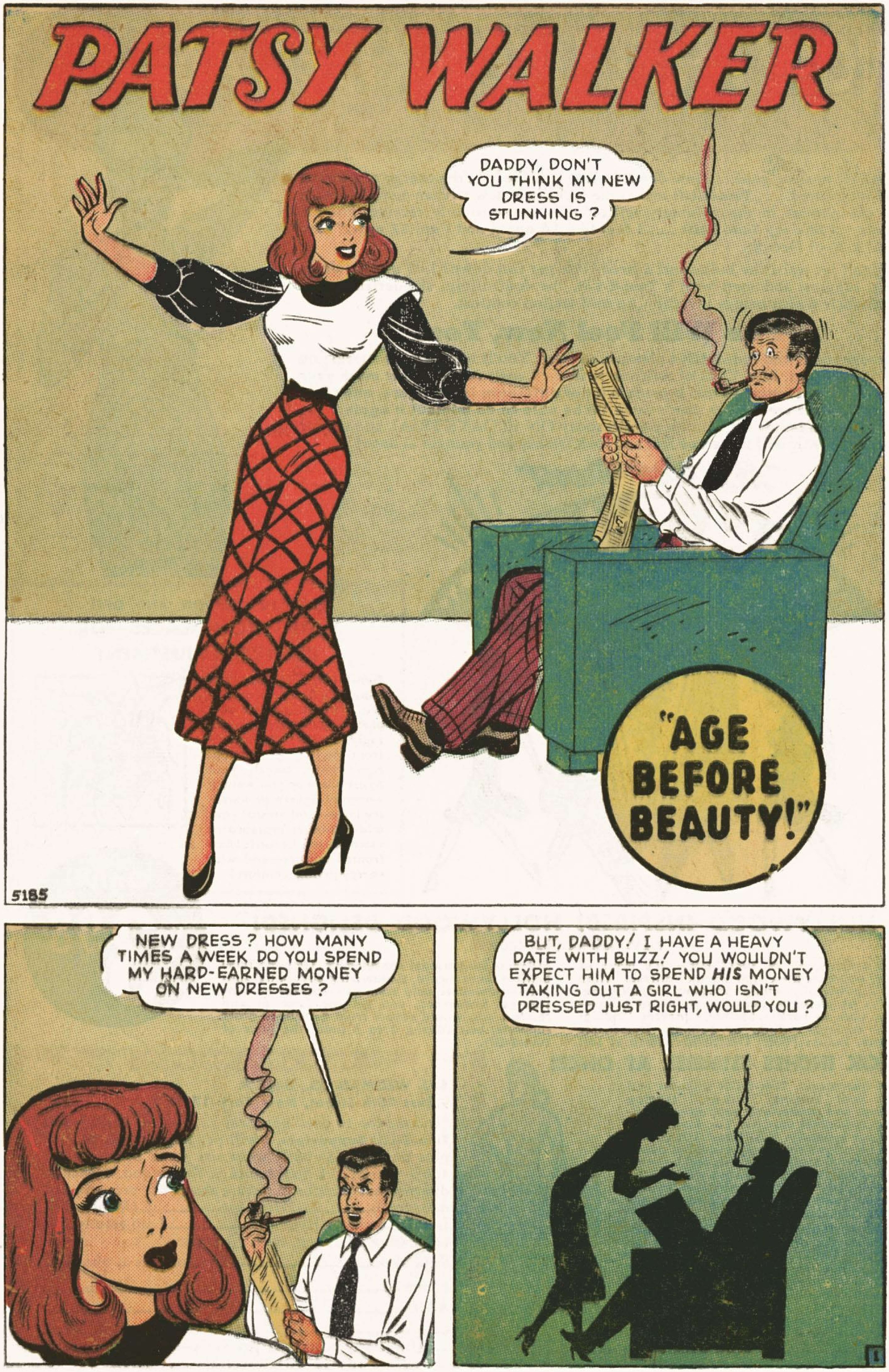
Name________

Address________

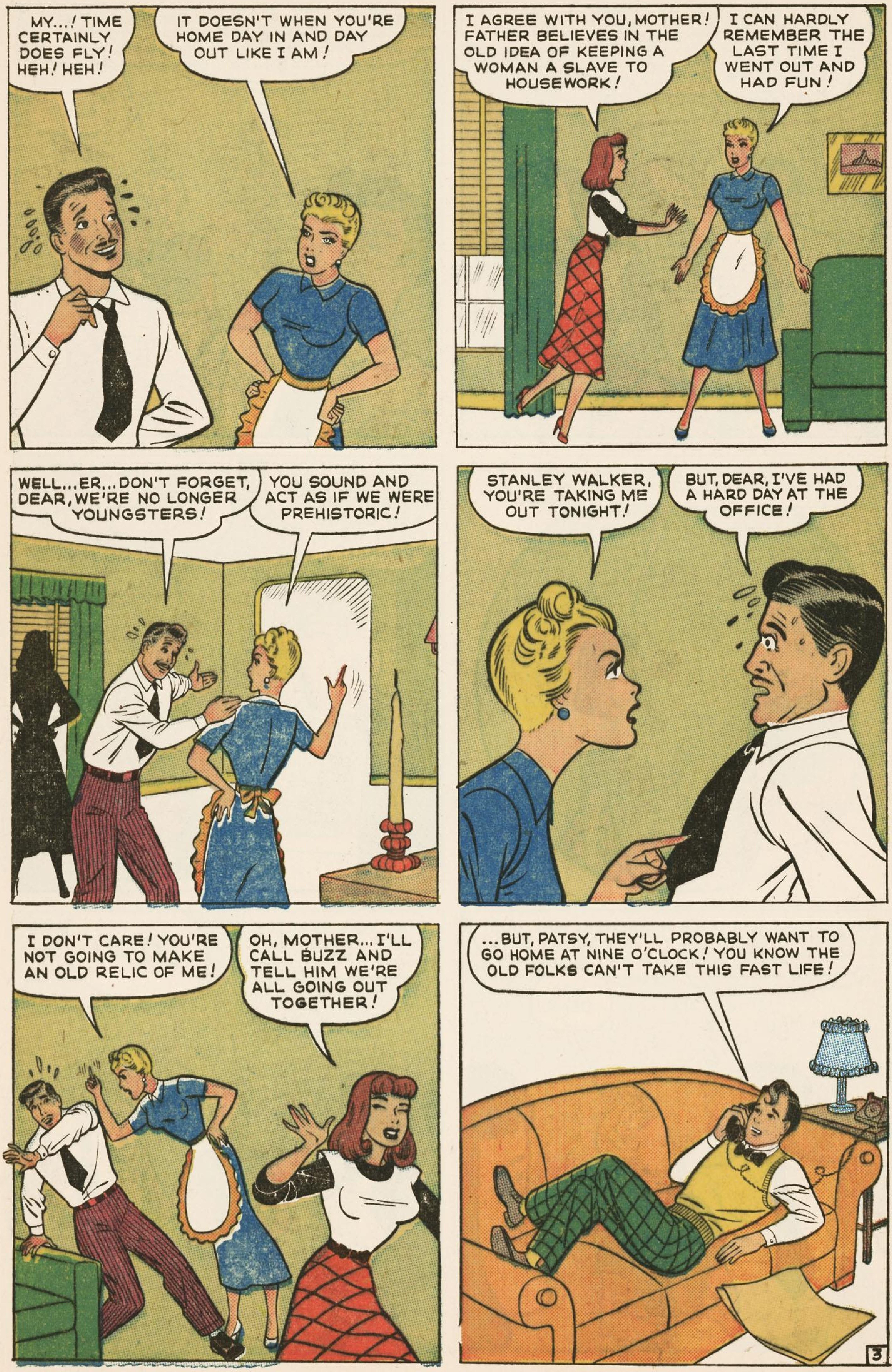
City________State________

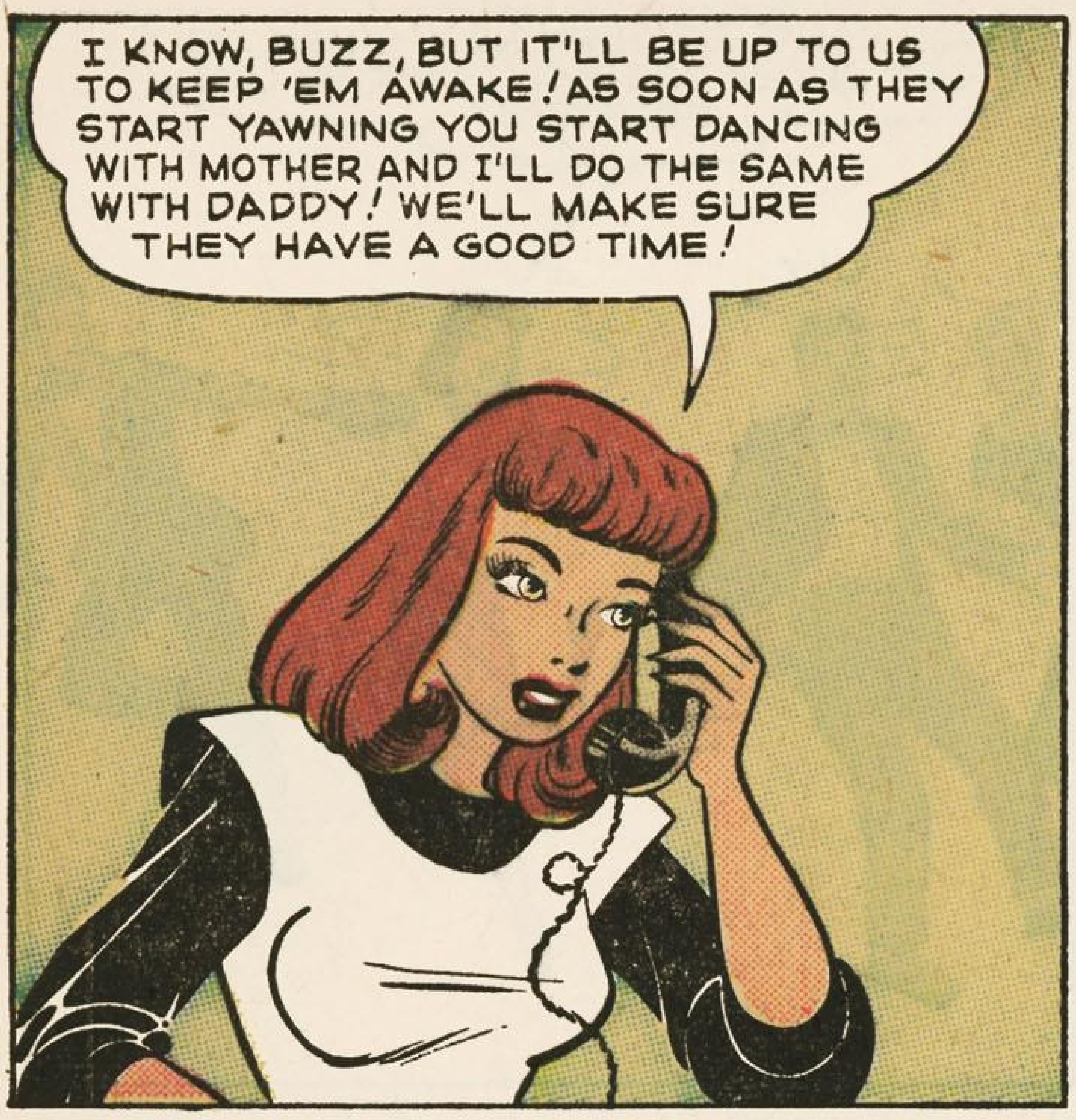
☐ We pay postage if you enclose payment now.

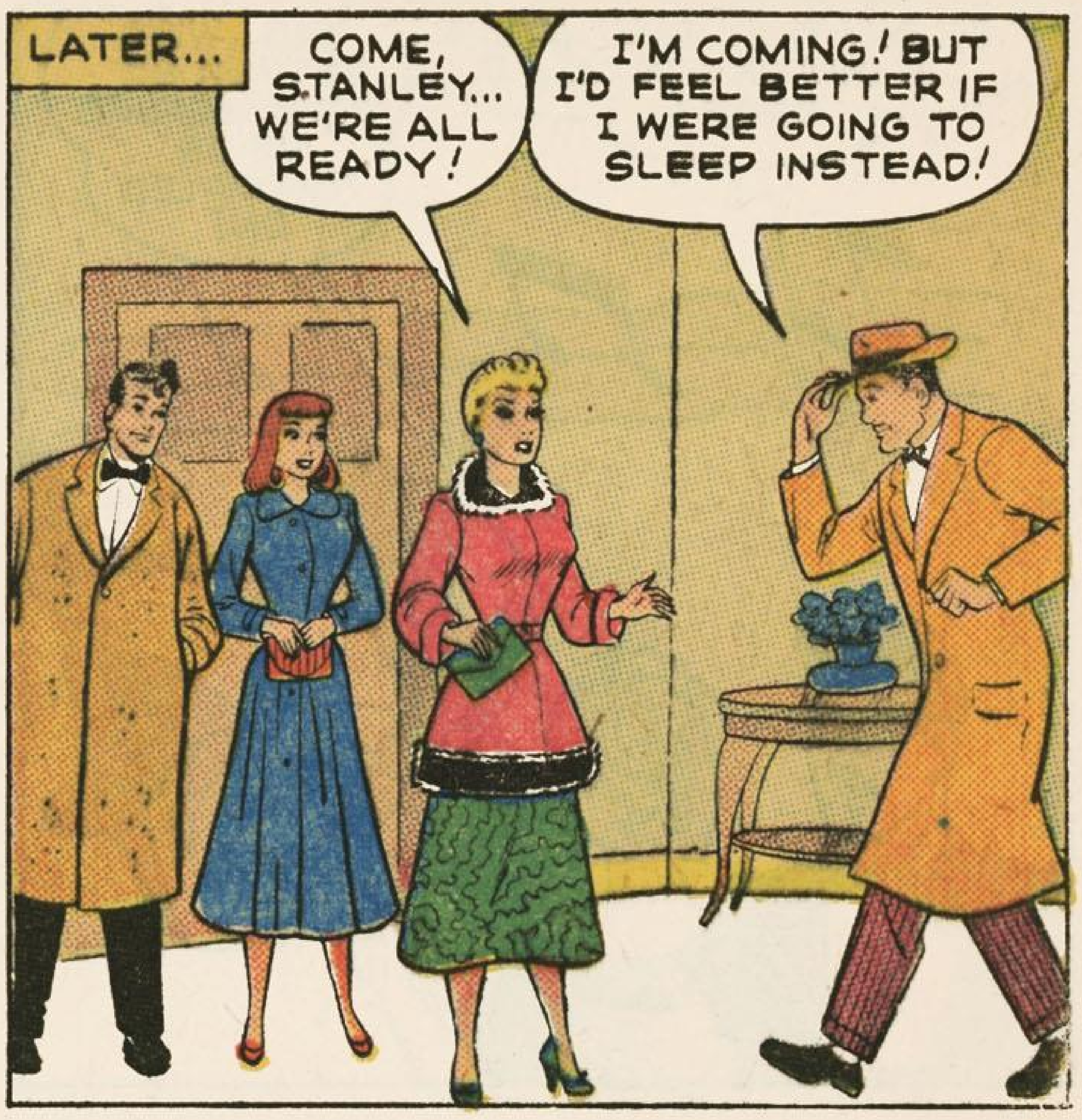
TUM-E-LIFT IS OBTAINABLE ONLY FROM US

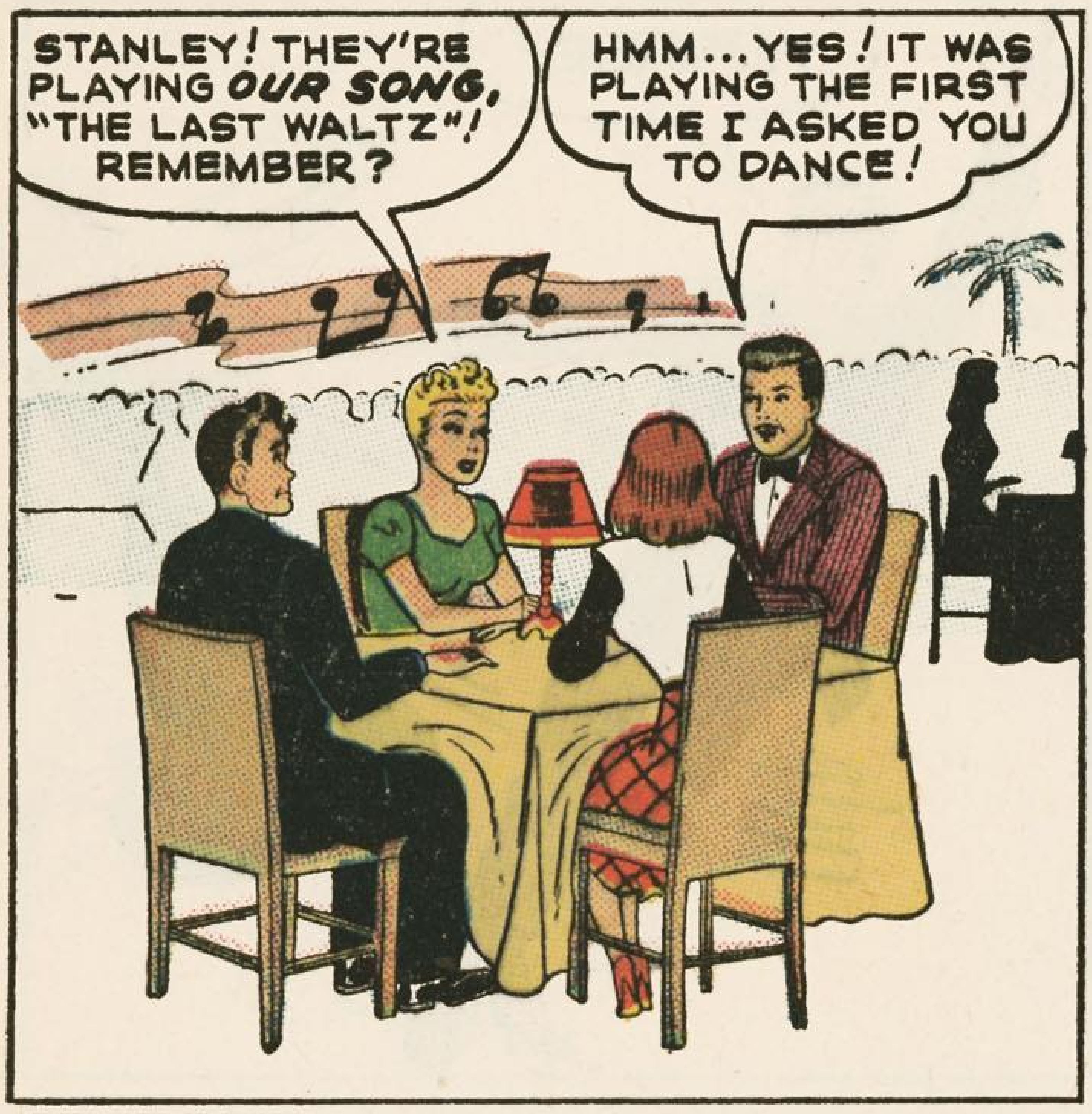

PATSY WALKER
DADDY, DON'T YOU THINK MY NEW DRESS IS STUNNING?
"AGE BEFORE BEAUTY!"
5185
NEW DRESS? HOW MANY TIMES A WEEK DO YOU SPEND MY HARD-EARNED MONEY ON NEW DRESSES?
BUT, DADDY! I HAVE A HEAVY DATE WITH BUZZ! YOU WOULDN'T EXPECT HIM TO SPEND HIS MONEY TAKING OUT A GIRL WHO ISN'T DRESSED JUST RIGHT, WOULD YOU?
1

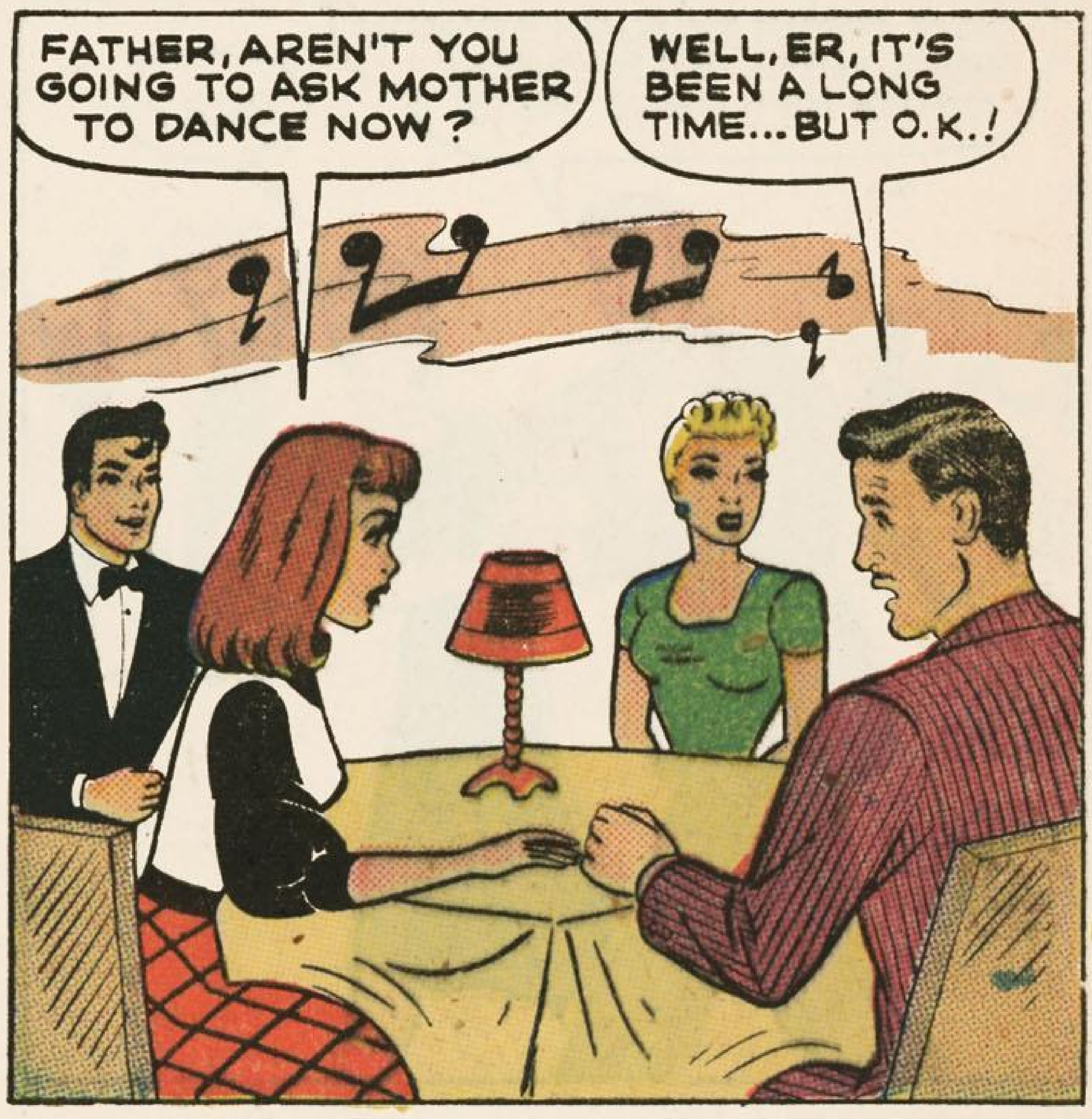
I DON'T CARE WHOM HE SPENDS **HIS** MONEY ON! ALL I KNOW IS THAT YOUR "STUNNING" GOWNS BRING ME BILLS THAT LEAVE ME STUNNED FOR WEEKS!
OH... MOTHER...
SHAME ON YOU, STANLEY! I'M SURE YOU'D NEVER HAVE TAKEN **ME** OUT IF I WEREN'T DRESSED JUST RIGHT WHEN WE WERE YOUNGER!
SNIFF!
I DON'T THINK FATHER **EVER** WAS YOUNG... HE ACTS LIKE AN OLD STICK-IN-THE-MUD!
YOUNG LADY, YOU DON'T SEE YOUR MOTHER BUYING NEW GOWNS EVERY WEEK, DO YOU?
NO! BUT THAT'S BECAUSE YOU NEVER TAKE HER OUT!
NEVER TAKE HER OUT? NONSENSE! WHY, JUST RECENTLY I TOOK HER TO THE GRAND BALL AT MY LODGE, DIDN'T I DEAR?
YES DEAR!
THAT WAS EXACTLY THREE YEARS AGO THIS APRIL!
ULP!

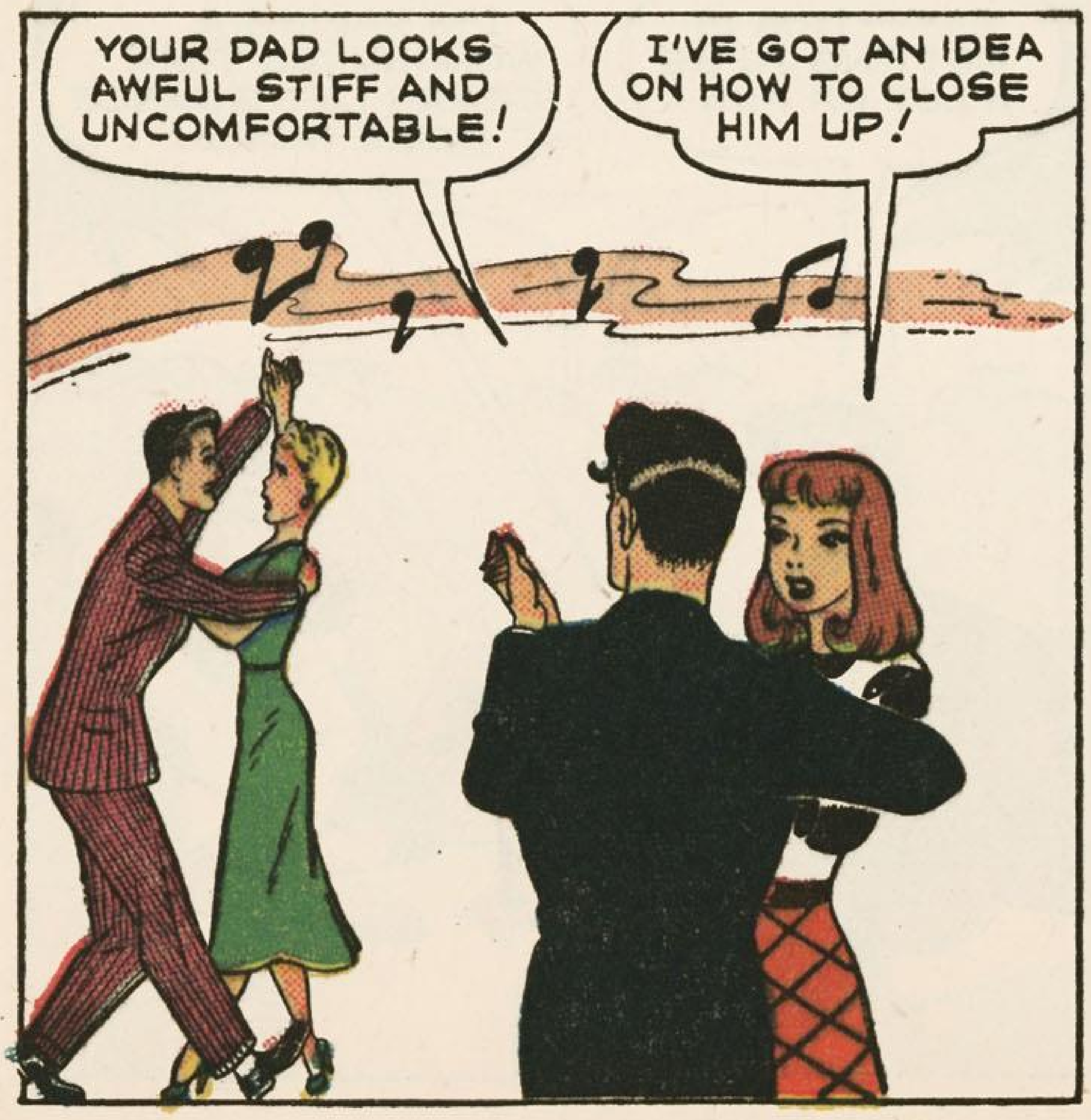

MY...! TIME CERTAINLY DOES FLY! HEH! HEH!
IT DOESN'T WHEN YOU'RE HOME DAY IN AND DAY OUT LIKE I AM!
I AGREE WITH YOU, MOTHER! FATHER BELIEVES IN THE OLD IDEA OF KEEPING A WOMAN A SLAVE TO HOUSEWORK!
I CAN HARDLY REMEMBER THE LAST TIME I WENT OUT AND HAD FUN!
WELL...ER...DON'T FORGET, DEAR, WE'RE NO LONGER YOUNGSTERS!
YOU SOUND AND ACT AS IF WE WERE PREHISTORIC!
STANLEY WALKER, YOU'RE TAKING ME OUT TONIGHT!
BUT, DEAR, I'VE HAD A HARD DAY AT THE OFFICE!
I DON'T CARE! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO MAKE AN OLD RELIC OF ME!
OH, MOTHER... I'LL CALL BUZZ AND TELL HIM WE'RE ALL GOING OUT TOGETHER!
...BUT, PATSY, THEY'LL PROBABLY WANT TO GO HOME AT NINE O'CLOCK! YOU KNOW THE OLD FOLKS CAN'T TAKE THIS FAST LIFE!

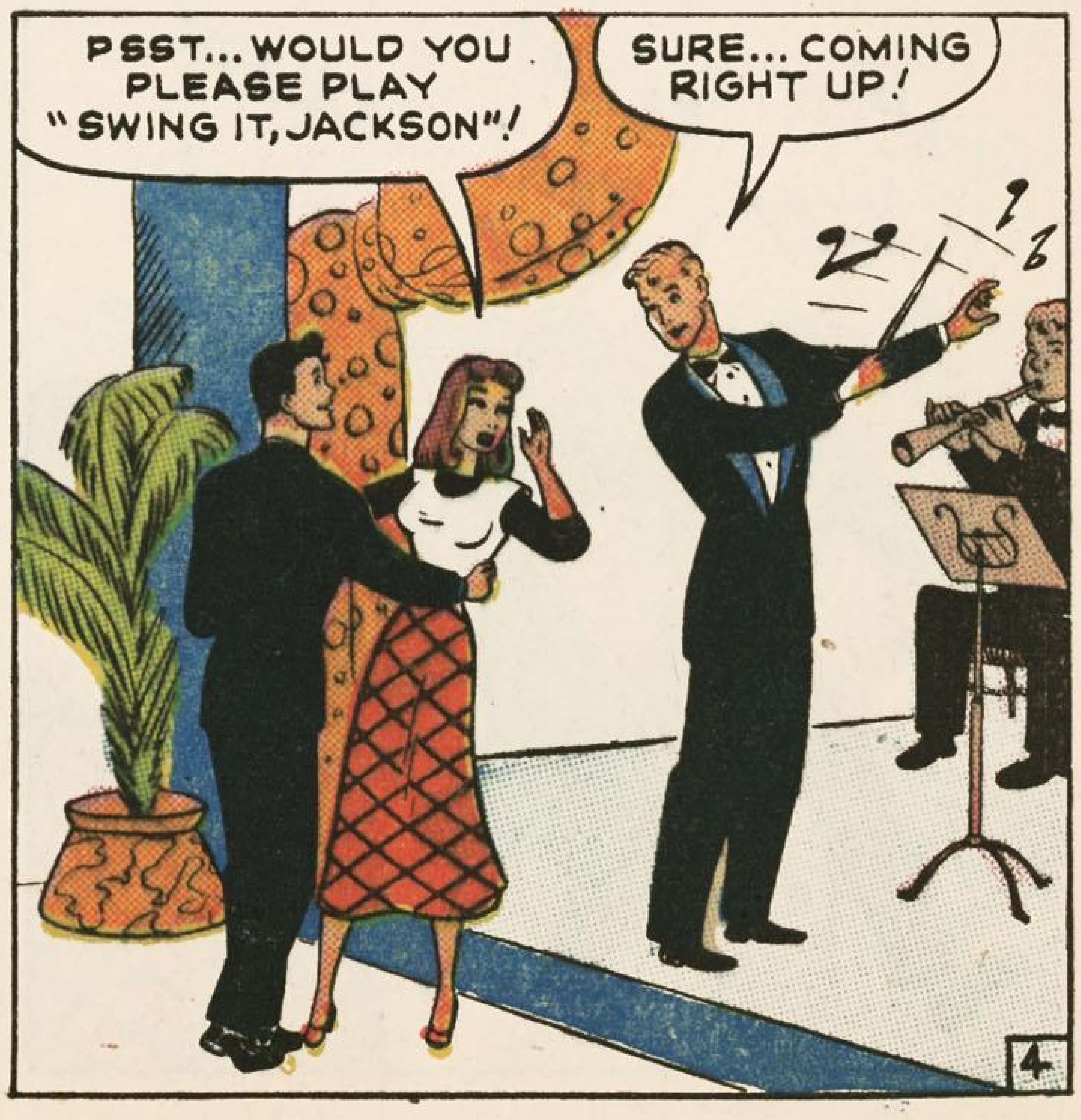

I KNOW, BUZZ, BUT IT'LL BE UP TO US TO KEEP 'EM AWAKE! AS SOON AS THEY START YAWNING YOU START DANCING WITH MOTHER AND I'LL DO THE SAME WITH DADDY! WE'LL MAKE SURE THEY HAVE A GOOD TIME!

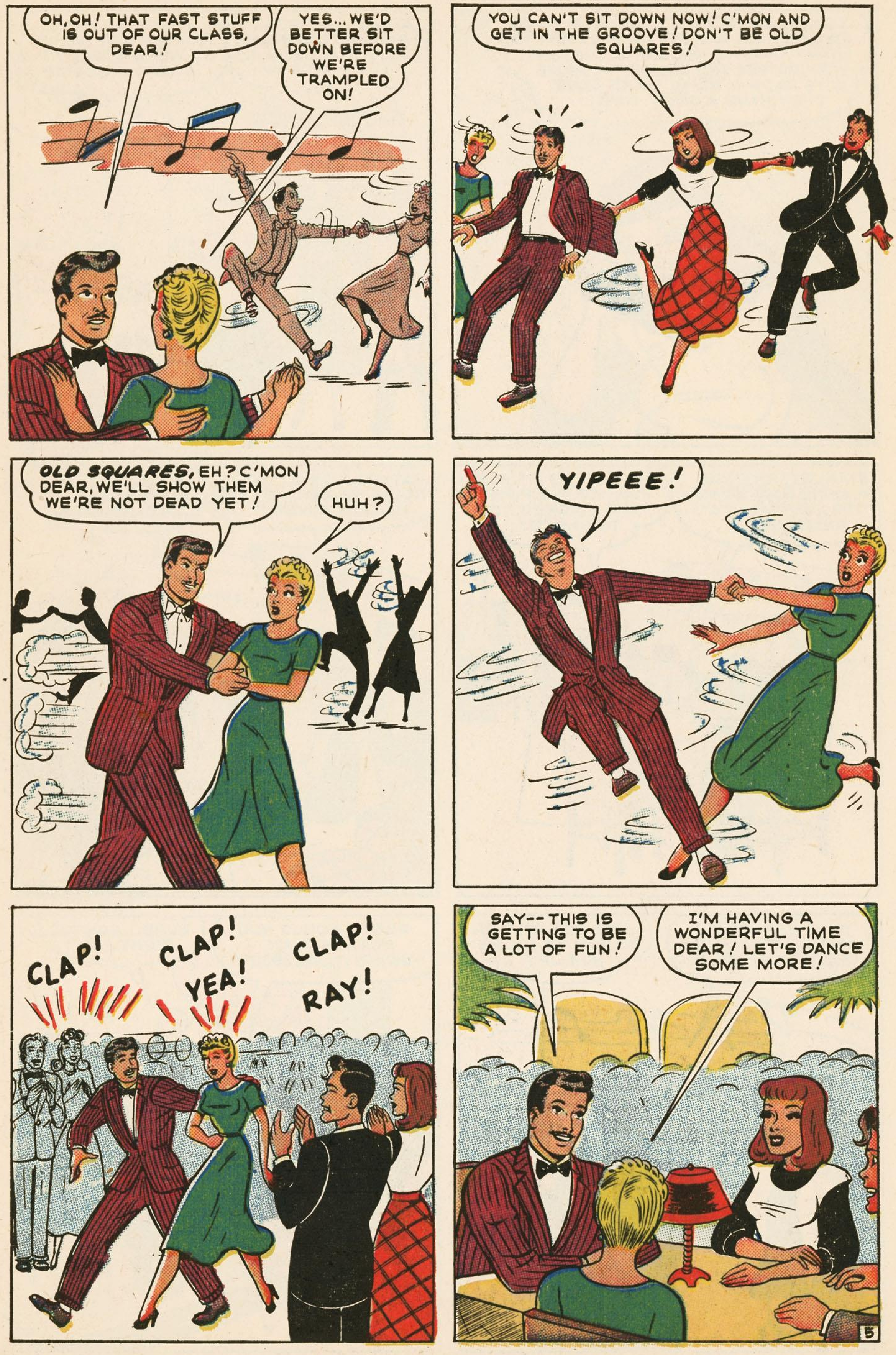

LATER...
COME, STANLEY... WE'RE ALL READY!
I'M COMING! BUT I'D FEEL BETTER IF I WERE GOING TO SLEEP INSTEAD!

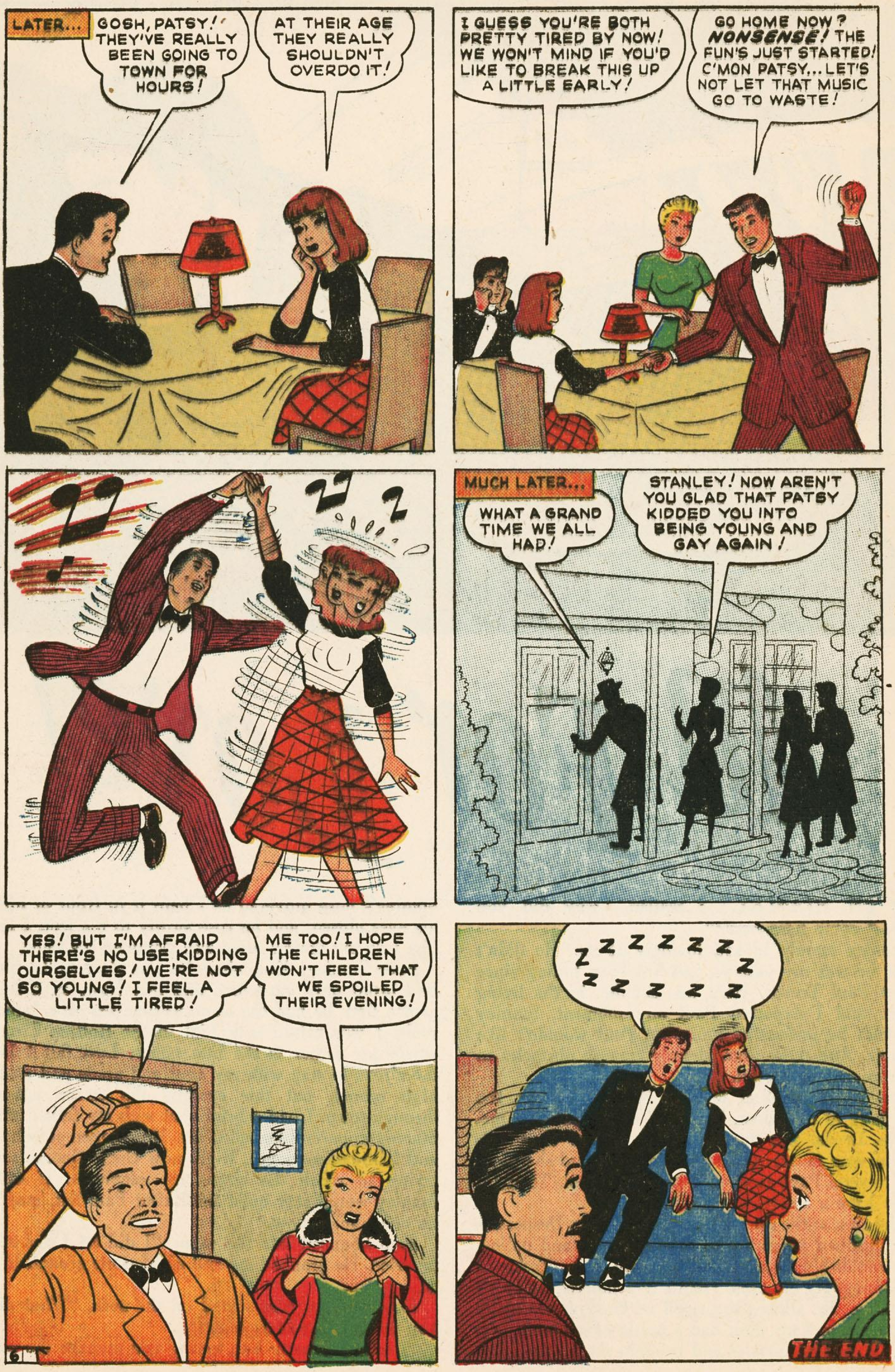

STANLEY! THEY'RE PLAYING OUR SONG, "THE LAST WALTZ"! REMEMBER?
HMM... YES! IT WAS PLAYING THE FIRST TIME I ASKED YOU TO DANCE!


FATHER, AREN'T YOU GOING TO ASK MOTHER TO DANCE NOW?
WELL, ER, IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME... BUT O.K.!


YOUR DAD LOOKS AWFUL STIFF AND UNCOMFORTABLE!
I'VE GOT AN IDEA ON HOW TO CLOSE HIM UP!


PSST... WOULD YOU PLEASE PLAY "SWING IT, JACKSON"!
SURE... COMING RIGHT UP!


OH, OH! THAT FAST STUFF IS OUT OF OUR CLASS, DEAR!
YES... WE'D BETTER SIT DOWN BEFORE WE'RE TRAMPLED ON!
YOU CAN'T SIT DOWN NOW! C'MON AND GET IN THE GROOVE! DON'T BE OLD SQUARES!
OLD SQUARES, EH? C'MON DEAR, WE'LL SHOW THEM WE'RE NOT DEAD YET!
HUH?
YIPEEE!
CLAP!
CLAP!
CLAP!
YEA!
RAY!
SAY-- THIS IS GETTING TO BE A LOT OF FUN!
I'M HAVING A WONDERFUL TIME DEAR! LET'S DANCE SOME MORE!


LATER...
GOSH, PATSY! THEY'VE REALLY BEEN GOING TO TOWN FOR HOURS!
AT THEIR AGE THEY REALLY SHOULDN'T OVERDO IT!
I GUESS YOU'RE BOTH PRETTY TIRED BY NOW! WE WON'T MIND IF YOU'D LIKE TO BREAK THIS UP A LITTLE EARLY!
GO HOME NOW? *NONSENSE!* THE FUN'S JUST STARTED! C'MON PATSY... LET'S NOT LET THAT MUSIC GO TO WASTE!
MUCH LATER...
WHAT A GRAND TIME WE ALL HAD!
STANLEY! NOW AREN'T YOU GLAD THAT PATSY KIDDED YOU INTO BEING YOUNG AND GAY AGAIN!
YES! BUT I'M AFRAID THERE'S NO USE KIDDING OURSELVES! WE'RE NOT SO YOUNG! I FEEL A LITTLE TIRED!
ME TOO! I HOPE THE CHILDREN WON'T FEEL THAT WE SPOILED THEIR EVENING!
ZZZZZZ ZZZZZZZ
THE END

Paul threw himself on the lion and tried to rescue me just as I punched Stanley in the nose.

All For Love!

PROVING A POINT AND OUTDOING A RIVAL CAN BE BIG PROBLEMS. BUT MARLA HAD ALL THIS—AND A LION, TOO!

By TRIPP HAMMOND

"OH, STANLEY," I wailed, "why did you come here *now?*"

Stanley merely looked lovingly at me. He didn't know he was my past—a past I'd been hiding since I met Paul Trevor. Here was Stanley in the living room, and I expected Paul any moment. Stanley wouldn't be jealous of Paul, but Paul wouldn't like Stanley. And there were already enough obstacles to my romance with Paul.

Paul's grandmother is Mrs. Drusilla Trevor, the first lady of this town, but she'd never heard of me, Marla Lewis. She favored Janet Crews as Paul's special date in our teen-age social life. And she planned to send Paul away to a private school. Then I'd *never* have a chance to see him!

The ring of the doorbell made me jump. Desperately, I grabbed a handful of Stanley's hair and pulled. He wouldn't budge. I stamped my foot. Tears of vexation stung my eyes. Then I remembered Stanley's weakness. He adored the smell of flowers, especially gardenias, and my aunt had a bottle of gardenia perfume. I dashed upstairs and brought the bottle down. Stanley's nose quivered as I held it in front of him, his eyes closed, and he rose slowly to his feet. I led him into the dining room and slammed the door.

Poor Stanley! Ever since he was six months old, he's loved only gardenias and me. Now, as a full-grown lion, he had the same weaknesses on a larger scale. I was raised with him in the Rollins Circus where my father is the lion tamer. Last fall I left the circus to stay with my aunt and uncle and go to high school, but this evening the circus passed through town. I had a brief visit with my father, and Stanley apparently smelled me. He escaped somehow and followed me home. Right now Uncle George was trying to reach the circus by telephone. If only Stanley would stay quiet until after Paul left, maybe no one would know.

Paul bounced into the room. "I did it! I *did* it!" he cried. He grabbed me and whirled me around in a wild polka.

Finally I got him seated on the sofa. "What did you do?" I asked suspiciously.

"I talked Granny into letting you manage the pincushion and pot-holder booth in her charity bazaar tomorrow," he said triumphantly.

I frowned. I knew that Mrs. Trevor ran an annual bazaar in her garden, and to her it was the world's largest social event, but I couldn't imagine what it had to do with me.

"Don't you see, Marla?" Paul continued. "If you run a booth, you're made socially—at least as far as Granny's concerned, and that's all that matters around here."

"Okay. So I'm made socially. Then what?"

He jumped up. "Then she'll stop throwing that Janet female at me. We can go places together. And," he pointed a finger at my nose, "you can convince her I should stay here in public school instead of going away to a private one."

The picture of me changing Mrs. Trevor's mind about anything seemed fantastic! "Are you sure you feel all right?" I asked.

Paul made a gesture of impatience. "Granny thinks all males are morons," he explained. "She'll only listen to intelligent women. If you sell a lot of pincushions and pot holders, she'll think you're a genius."

"That would take more than genius. It would take a miracle, wouldn't it?" I asked.

Paul shook his head. "You only have to improve on previous years," he said. "Granny makes those dizzy pincushions and pot holders herself, so the booth is her favorite. Because other girls have done so badly, I was able to persuade her to try new talent."

It occurred to me then that my circus training might give me some ideas. "I'll try," I said.

Paul grinned and took my hands. "I'm counting on you," he said. "You're the smartest girl I know." He pulled me to my feet. "This calls for a celebration. I'll get some sodas from your refrigerator."

Before I could stop him, he'd dashed to the dining room. He started in, but suddenly stopped and backed out slowly, closing the door. "Do you like cats?" he asked me, frowning.

I nodded dumbly.

He nodded in reply. He peeked into the dining room again and closed the door quickly. "Really *big* cats?" he asked. Then he sighed once and slumped to the floor.

Somehow I got him to the sofa, and chafed his wrists until his eyes fluttered open. "Marla, I had the most awful dream," he said.

"That was no dream," I said. "That was Stanley." There was no reason to pretend any longer. I told Paul all.

"You're *positive* he's harmless?" Paul said, sitting up, white-faced.

"Stanley wouldn't hurt a flea," I insisted.

"A lion tamer's daughter!" Paul said, awe and admiration in his voice.

"What would your grandmother say if she knew that?" I asked.

"Granny's not really a snob," Paul explained, "but she might think people who keep lions in their dining rooms are—odd."

"I hope she never finds out," I said.

Uncle George reached the circus the next morning, but no one had come for Stanley by one o'clock when I left for Mrs. Trevor's garden bazaar.

Paul met me, his face downcast. "Janet Crews talked Granny into moving your booth to the bottom of the garden," he said.

Janet had seen to it that my booth was placed in the least noticeable place. It was isolated, hidden by an oak tree near a guest cottage. "I'll need some signs painted," I said grimly.

An hour later, gaudy posters, hung from trees, pointed the way to my booth. A framed ten-dollar bill was displayed above the counter beside Mrs. Trevor's fanciest pincushion. Then I sent Paul to get me a large megaphone. When he returned with it, I had fashioned myself a hat out of pincushions and crepe paper. I was ready for the first customer.

"You look gorgeous in that hat," Paul said gloomily, "but I don't think very many people will get down here to see it."

Just then the first prospective customers appeared on the path. "Watch," I said to him, and began my spiel.

"Step right this way, folks," I shouted, "for the biggest, snappiest, most rewarding attraction of the fair! Guess how many stitches went into this beautiful pincushion, and win ten dollars *plus* the cushion! With each and every purchase goes one free chance at this chance of a lifetime!"

The people paused, then approached my booth. "You sew, dear," a man said to his wife. "How many stitches in the cushion?"

Flattered, the woman studied it. "About ten thousand," she said.

"That many?" the man was astonished. "I would have guessed a thousand."

"Two purchases will prove if either of you is right," I said. Five minutes later, I'd taken in six dollars.

"But how did *you* count those stitches?" Paul asked, eyes wide-open.

"Your grandmother estimated about eight thousand," I said, grinning. "I made the figure 8,162. If the winner wants to prove us wrong by taking the cushion apart and counting the stitches, we'll remind him it was all for sweet charity."

"How very *clever*," a girl's voice said. I knew immediately that the blonde leaning on the counter was Janet Crews. She looked me over and obviously didn't like what she saw. "So *this* is your new little friend," she said to Paul. "I've taken the trouble to investigate her. She comes from a *circus!*"

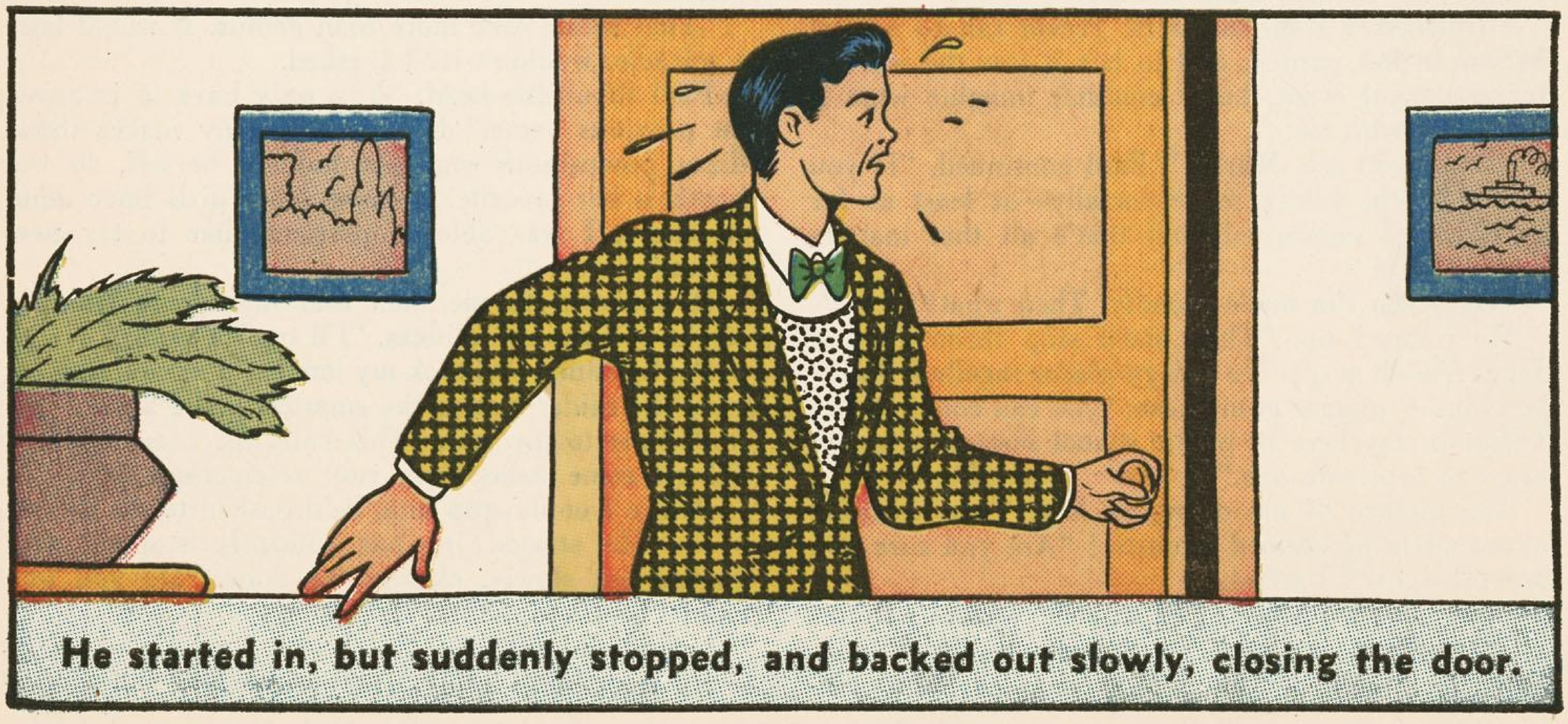
"I know that," Paul said quietly.

For a second Janet was taken aback. "Does your grandmother know it?" she asked.

"Why don't you tell her?" I said. "I've nothing to be ashamed of."

"Why don't you go sell your salt water taffy kisses?" Paul said to Janet, and she flounced off.

At that moment a huge paw slid under the canvas at the back. The paw was followed by the rest of Stanley. He looked at me wistfully and then licked me; it was like being rubbed with an acre of wet sandpaper. Horrified, I saw that more people were approaching. I grabbed Stanley's tail and tried to drag him under the counter. He wouldn't move. I



He started in, but suddenly stopped, and backed out slowly, closing the door.

got behind him and pushed. Stanley isn't deliberately obstinate, he just isn't very bright and didn't know what I wanted. Then I remembered the gardenia perfume in my purse. Quickly I got the bottle, and with it enticed Stanley under the counter, which hid all but his erect tail. I hung the prize pincushion on his tail and began my spiel.

When this group left, I threw twelve more dollars into the basket under the counter and went to call Paul down from the oak tree. "Watch the booth," I said, "while I do something about Stanley."

When I tried to take the bottle from Stanley, he took my arm in his mouth and gnawed gently. Paul threw himself on the lion and tried to rescue me just as I punched Stanley in the nose. This made me spill most of the perfume into the money basket and only tickled Stanley, but it gave him the right idea, and he released me. He followed me meekly out of the booth and into the bathroom of the guest cottage.

I returned just in time for another group of customers. Paul watched the money pouring into the basket for a short while, and then, giving me a grin and the thumbs-up signal, he left.

.An hour later, during a lull, Mrs. Trevor appeared. "Have you sold anything?" she asked.

I nodded.

"I hope you can do twenty dollars worth," she said, adding proudly, "Once we took in thirty-two dollars."

I already had almost a hundred dollars, but before I had a chance to tell her, she leaned across the counter and whispered, "The police telephoned me and said some crooks were seen in town and they may be mingling with the guests here. I'm warning all the people in the booths to watch their money carefully."

As she spoke, her butler appeared, pale and shaking. He tried to speak, but he made no noise.

"What is it, Phillips?" Mrs. Trevor asked impatiently.

"The guest house—in the bathroom!" Phillips squeaked.

"What *are* you talking about?" Mrs. Trevor demanded.

Phillips took a deep breath. "A lion," he said, "in the bathroom."

I gulped, and Mrs. Trevor regarded her butler in stony silence. "Phillips," she said finally, "can you stand there and expect me to believe that?"

Phillips blushed. "I guess not, madam," he confessed.

"You've had too much to do today," she said. "Go lie down, and I'll tell the temporary servants to collect the money from the booths."

They left then, and more customers arrived. I was too busy to think about Stanley.

Finally Paul appeared to count the money. "A hundred and twenty-three dollars," he said, his eyes glistening. He squeezed my hands. "Granny will adore you," he added. "Business at the other booths is terrible. The guests just stand around in groups, too bored to do anything but talk. You can't lose!"

"Don't be too sure about that," a voice said. It was Janet again. She smiled at us without humor. "I've just talked to Mrs. Trevor," she continued. "I convinced her I should handle this booth and Marla should take mine."

"But—why?" Paul stammered.

"The people seem interested in pot holders and pincushions this year," she said. "I've had more experience so I should handle the business. No one seems to want salt water taffy kisses today."

"Maybe your kisses are too sour," I said.

"You're trying to take Marla's credit away from her," Paul said disgustedly.

Janet smiled again. "Do you want to discuss the matter with your grandmother?" she asked Paul. "You know she'd pay no attention to you, and she'd listen to me before she would this little circus upstart!"

Paul looked as if he were about to leap over the counter at Janet, but I stopped him. I felt sick at the idea of losing credit for what I'd accomplished, but something told me it would be even worse if I bickered about it with Janet in front of Mrs. Trevor. "Let her have the booth," I said scornfully.

There was a gleam of triumph in Janet's eye. "You'd better let me have that hat, too," she said, "since it goes with the decorations."

Wordlessly, I unpinned my improvised hat. Janet looked around for a mirror. "There's one in the guest cottage bathroom," Paul said.

Janet had gone inside before I remembered Stanley. Then I just held my breath. It seemed hours before she appeared again and staggered toward us. In front of Paul, she stiffened and suddenly slapped him hard. "You practical joker!" she shrieked. "Don't ever speak to me again!" And she fainted.

"I'll put her back in the salt water taffy booth," Paul said, grinning at me.

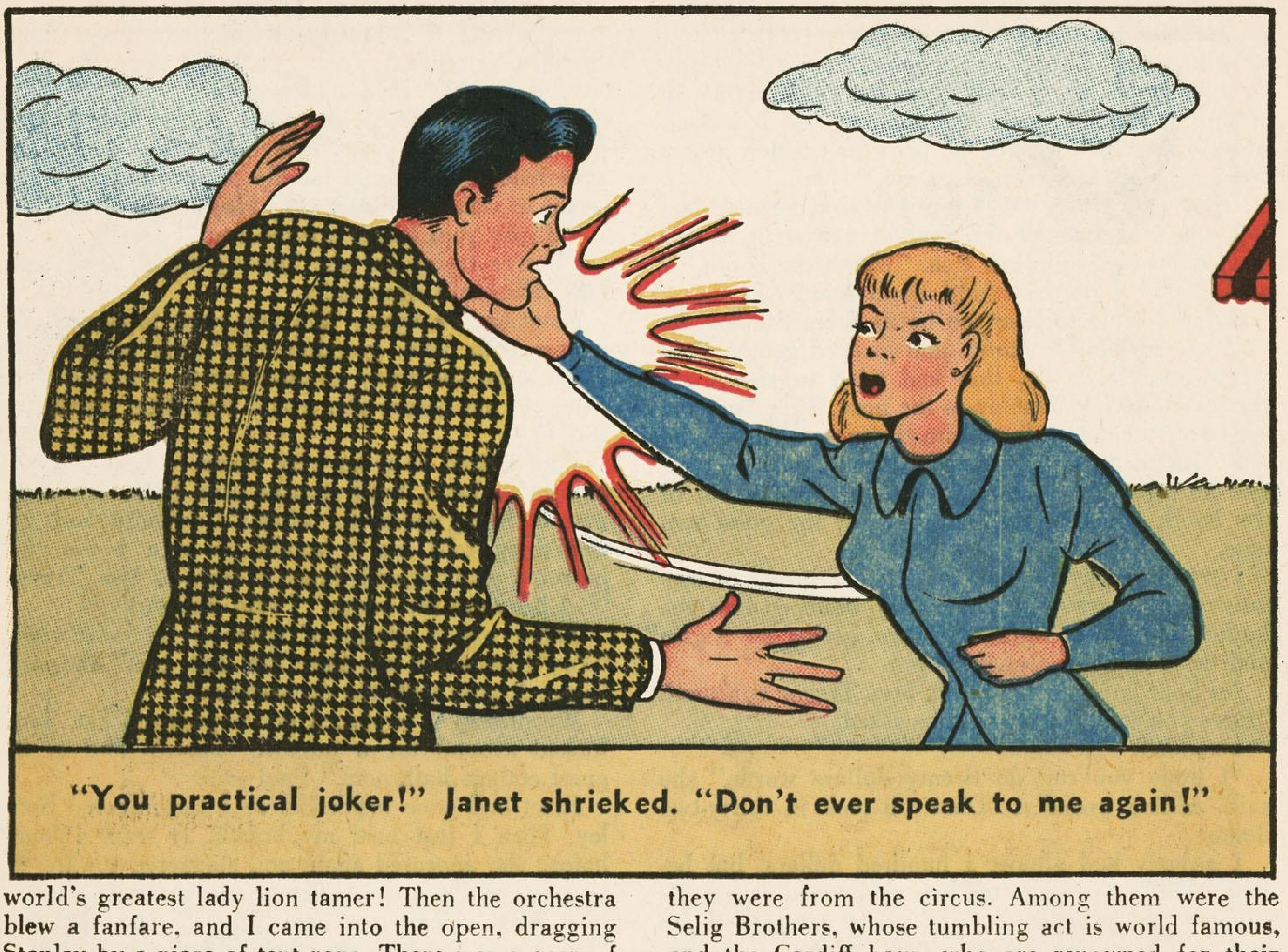
After they'd gone, a servant came to take the money I'd made so far. I was glad to get rid of it because it reeked of gardenias. Then I debated whether I should close the booth and do something about Stanley before he caused a panic or whether I should stay and make every possible sale. But where would I take him and how could I get him out without being seen?

Paul dashed up again, his face an angry scowl. "Marla, the money has been stolen!" he said. "Someone slugged the servant and got the bag. The servants are watching the exits, and no one will be allowed to leave, but if the police come and search everybody, the fair will be ruined."

My heart sank. My hoarse voice and hard work had been in vain. Mrs. Trevor would never know how well I'd done.

Then there was a crash from the guest cottage. The door flew off its hinges, and Stanley appeared, yawning. I felt Paul stiffen so I put a reassuring hand on his arm. Stanley required some diversion. He wanted some more of his favorite scent. That's when I remembered how my money had reeked of gardenia and that it must be in the bag with the rest! I turned quickly to Paul and handed him the megaphone. "I want you to make an announcement," I said.

Paul did his best to sound like a master of ceremonies. He introduced me as *the* Marla Lewis, the



"You practical joker!" Janet shrieked. "Don't ever speak to me again!"

world's greatest lady lion tamer! Then the orchestra blew a fanfare, and I came into the open, dragging Stanley by a piece of tent rope. There was a gasp of astonishment and fear from the audience, but by the time I'd pushed and cuffed Stanley through a few acrobatic tricks, the people settled down to uneasy interest.

"At least, no one's bored," Paul whispered.

"As Stanley's last trick," I announced then, "he will show you he is part bloodhound. We've hidden a bag of money on a man in the audience. Stanley will find the man and hold him." I dragged Stanley toward the crowd. "There's no need to be afraid," I added.

On the way Stanley almost ruined the act by getting interested in a rosebush. I got him away only because he smelled some perfume in the crowd. In spite of my assurance, people stumbled over each other to avoid us as we walked among them. I was beginning to fear the plan would fail when suddenly Stanley's tail stiffened and he sniffed expectantly. Pulling me after him, he ambled straight for a dark man in a blue suit. The man regarded us in speechless horror, then turned to run.

But Stanley had already located the source of his favorite scent, and in one bound he reached the man. Gently he knocked him down and held him with one huge paw. Stanley closed his eyes and sniffed ecstatically. Quickly Paul and I found the canvas bag under the man's coat. Stanley, his eyes still closed, followed us as we carried the bag.

The applause from the audience was deafening.

At that moment a group of men appeared in the garden, running toward us. To my relief I saw that they were from the circus. Among them were the Selig Brothers, whose tumbling act is world famous, and the Cardiff boys, who are renowned for their aerial trapeze work.

"The crowd thinks Stanley was just an act," I whispered to them frantically. "Pretend you're part of the performance."

These were show people, and they grasped the situation at a glance. With a whoop one of the Cardiff boys leaped for the branches of a tree, and the Selig Brothers began their series of fantastic spills and twists. By the time we got Stanley into his cage, the crowd was engrossed in this new entertainment. No one even noticed the policemen removing the man in the blue suit.

Two hours later Mrs. Trevor and I were sitting in her room. "That was the most successful *and* the most exciting bazaar we've ever had," she said, "and it was due entirely to you, my dear."

"I did nothing really," I murmured modestly.

Mrs. Trevor shook her head and filled my teacup. "You know," she confided, "ever since I was a girl, I've wanted to be a lion tamer." She smiled ruefully. "The closest I came to it was the way I tamed Paul's grandfather. The Trevor men need the helping hand of a strong woman. I hope you'll see a lot of Paul."

"I'd like to—if he doesn't go to that private school," I said.

Paul was waiting for me downstairs. "I was right, wasn't I?" he exclaimed. "My plan worked!"

"It certainly did, Paul. You're *wonderfully* clever," I said because, in spite of Mrs. Trevor, *I* know you don't handle boys the way you do lions!

THE END

FOOD FOR FUN

CREME CARAMEL . . .

To satisfy anyone's sweet tooth anytime, try this delectable combination of caramel and custard.

Beat four eggs until light and lemon colored. Add them to a quart of scalded milk. Stir in one teaspoon of vanilla and one cup of sugar.

Line a large mold with caramel, made by melting half a cup of sugar and cooking it until it becomes a rich brown color. Be careful not to burn the sugar.

Pour the custard into the caramel-lined mold, set it in a pan of hot water, and bake in a moderate oven for 20 minutes. Let cool and then unmold "upside down" on serving platter.

CHEESE CHIPS . . .

When you have the gang in after school someday surprise them by serving potato chips spread with this cheese mixture, and soda pop.

Mix together in a bowl five packages of cream cheese, about three tablespoons of capers and two tablespoons of finely-chopped onion. Add a tube of anchovy paste, and season with a dash of Worcestershire sauce, two teapsoons of dry mustard, a pinch of cayenne, four tablespoons of chopped chives and one tablespoon of caraway seeds.

Blend thoroughly, spread on potato chips or thin crackers before serving.

SKEWER MAGIC . . .

Skewer cookery need not always be associated with the great outdoors. If you've a good grill or broiler in your kitchen, you can turn out a perfectly good "shish-kebab" right at home.

Alternate plump chicken livers, bacon, mushrooms and button onions on long skewers; brush with melted butter; season with salt and pepper; and broil just a few minutes until the lineup is tender but not mushy or overdone. During the broiling process, baste the ingredients with the pan drippings.

Serve the skewers on large plates with a large bunch of crisp watercress alongside.

MEXICAN NOODLES . . .

From south of the border comes this suggestion on how to transform noodles into an interesting dish.

Fry a couple of onions in bacon fat until they are browned lightly. Remove the onions and fry the contents of a package of noodles in the fat until browned. You'll need plenty of fat to prevent burning.

Pour off the fat, put the onions in the pan with the noodles and add two seeded and sliced green peppers, one very hot red pepper and a can of tomatoes with their liquid. Cover the pan and let simmer until the noodles are cooked. Add salt and pepper to taste.

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GUY MADISON (3 Physique Poses)
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JAMES MASON (8 Poses)
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MARGARET O'BRIEN (2 Poses)
GREGORY PECK (8 Poses)
GENE AUTRY (8 Poses)
JENNIFER JONES (4 Poses)
FRANK SINATRA & various Guest Stars at his broadcasts (20 Poses)
ROY ROGERS at home with his children (8 Poses)
PERRY COMO (6 Poses)
DALE EVANS (4 Poses)
SHIRLEY TEMPLE in wedding gown & JOHN AGAR *after wedding ceremonies* (6 Poses)
LARRY PARKS kissing RITA HAYWORTH (3 Poses)
ROY ROGERS and Trigger (4 Poses)
CORNEL WILDE (4 Poses)
JEANNE CRAIN (4 Poses)
GENE AUTRY and Champion (4 Poses)
SUNSET CARSON (2 Poses)
AL "LASH" LA RUE (2 Poses)
TYRONE POWER (2 Physique Poses)
YVONNE DE CARLO (3 Bathing Suit Poses)
LARRY PARKS & BETTY GARRETT (4 Poses)
JEANNE CRAIN (2 Bathing Suit Poses)
SHIRLEY TEMPLE and Baby Daughter (2 Poses)
GENE TIERNEY (6 Bathing Suit Poses)
ELIZABETH TAYLOR with parents (2 Poses)
LANA TURNER & PETER LAWFORD (2 Poses)
ESTHER WILLIAMS (4 Bathing Suit Poses)
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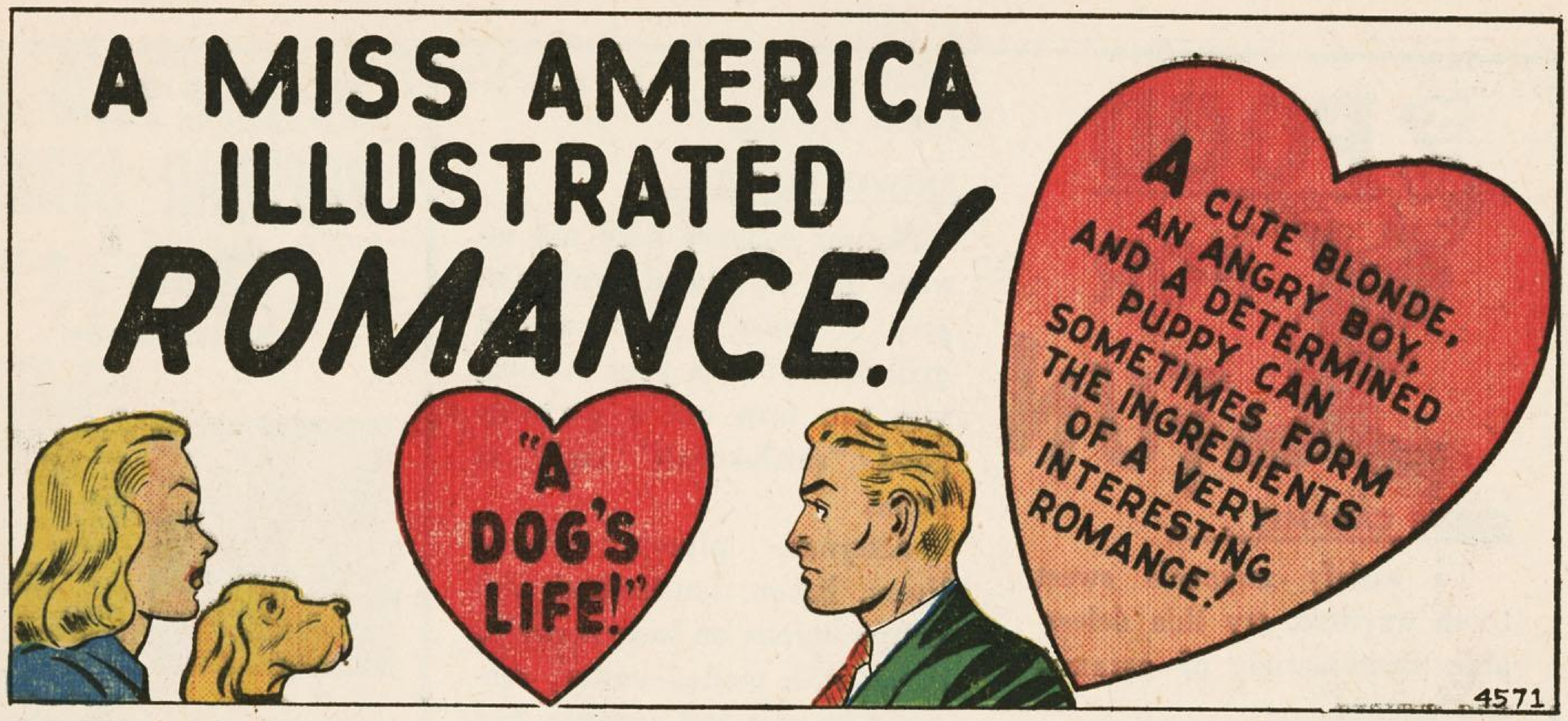
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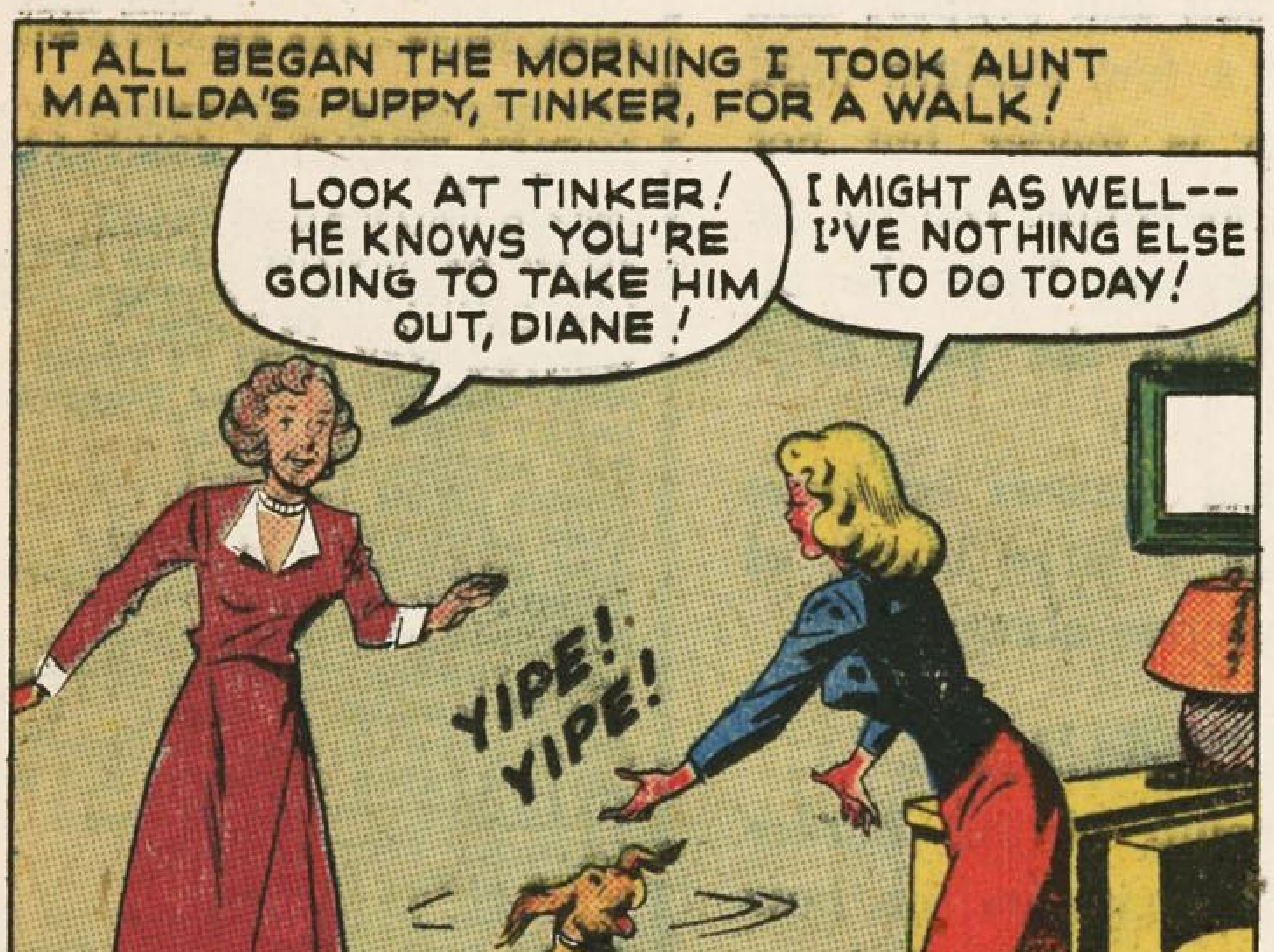
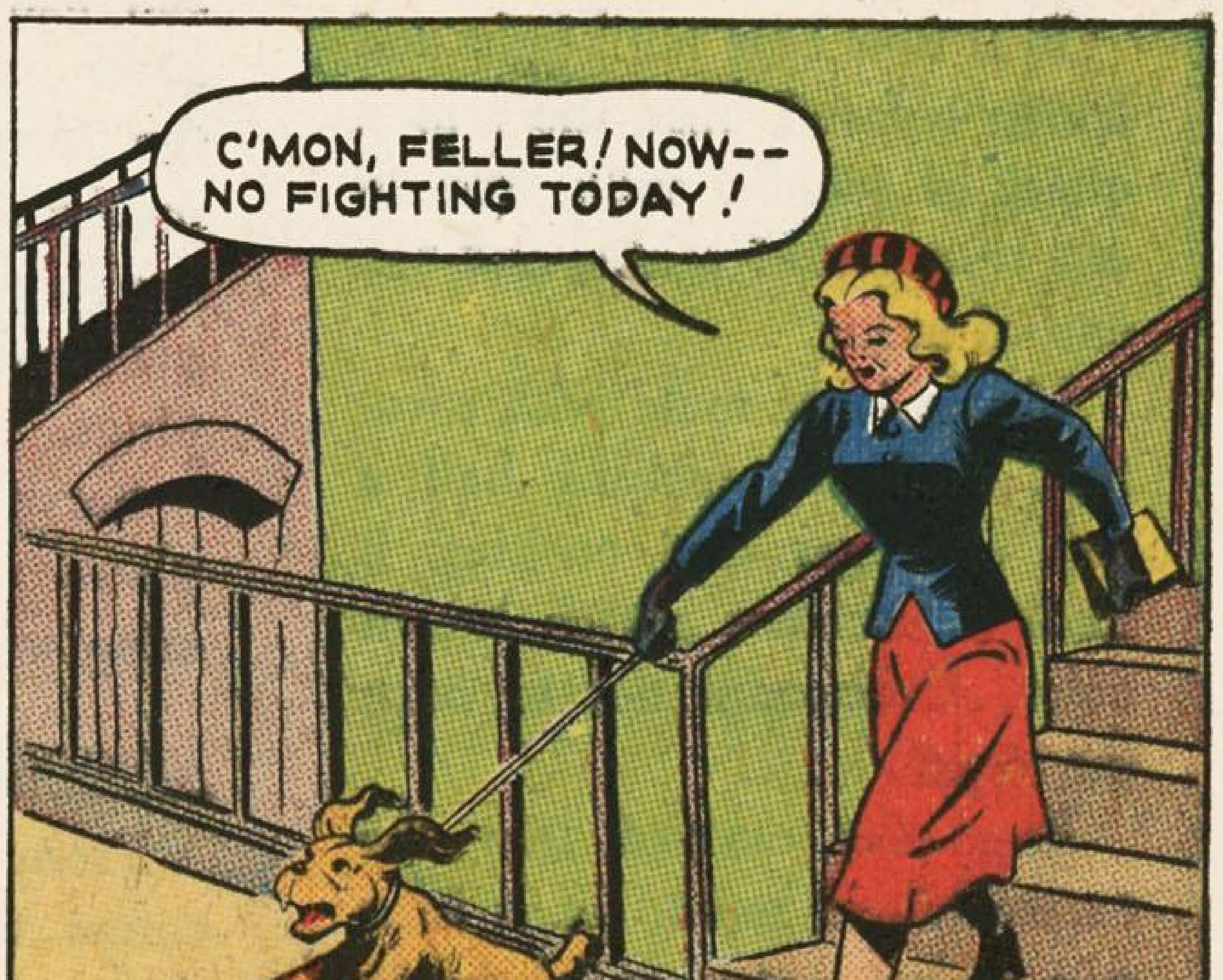
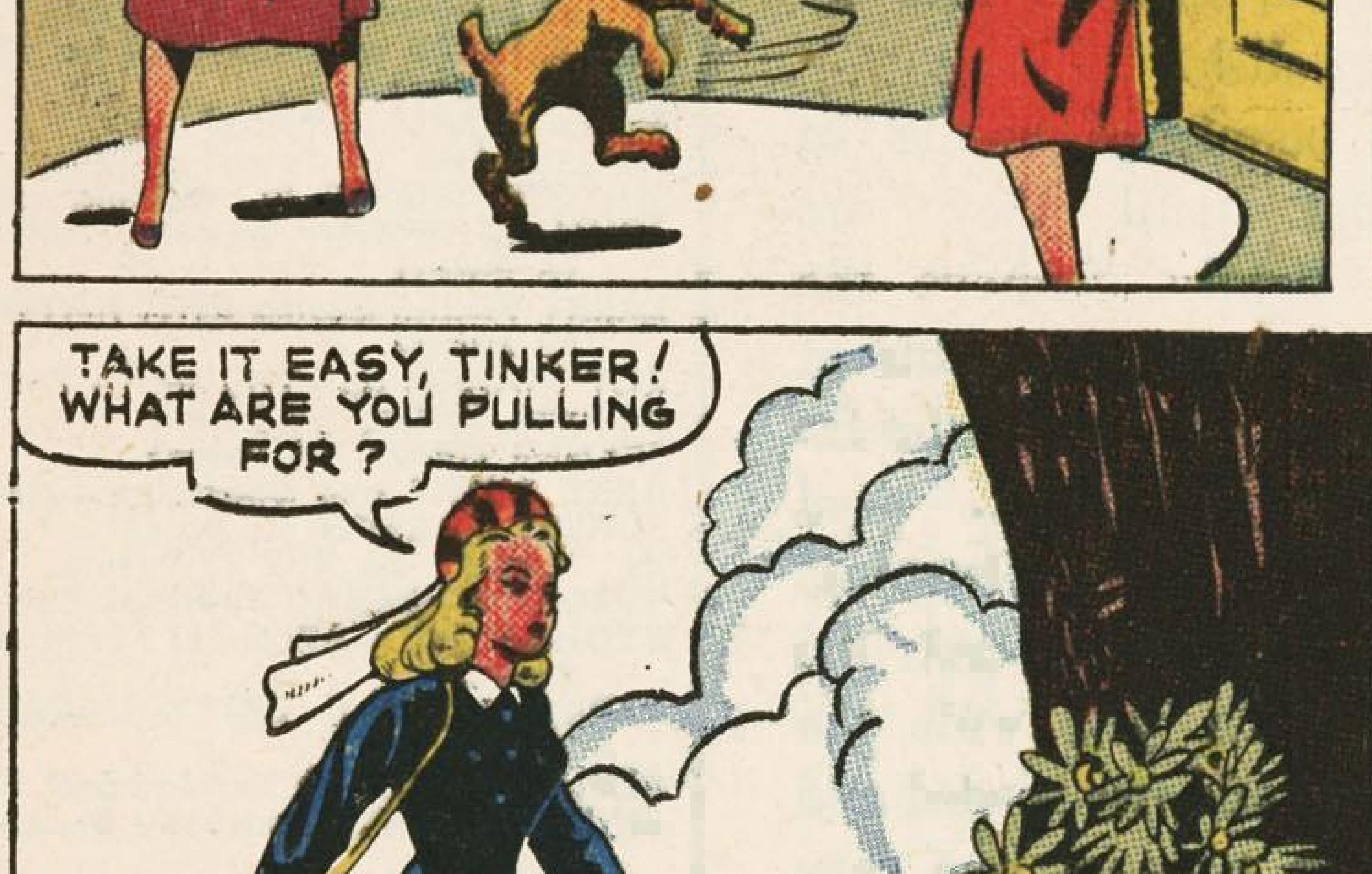
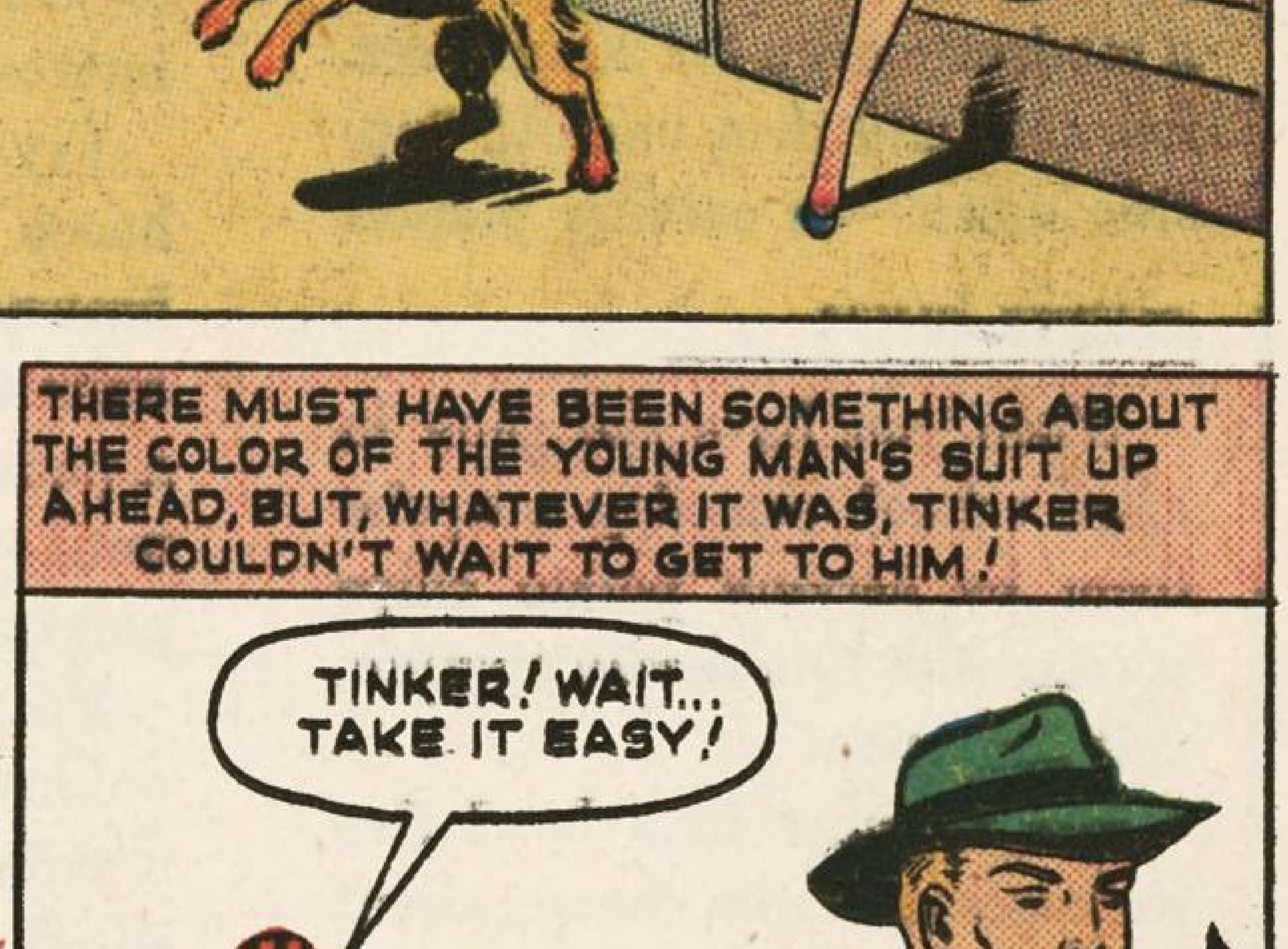

IT ALL BEGAN THE MORNING I TOOK AUNT MATILDA'S PUPPY, TINKER, FOR A WALK!
LOOK AT TINKER! HE KNOWS YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE HIM OUT, DIANE!
I MIGHT AS WELL-- I'VE NOTHING ELSE TO DO TODAY!
YIPE! YIPE!

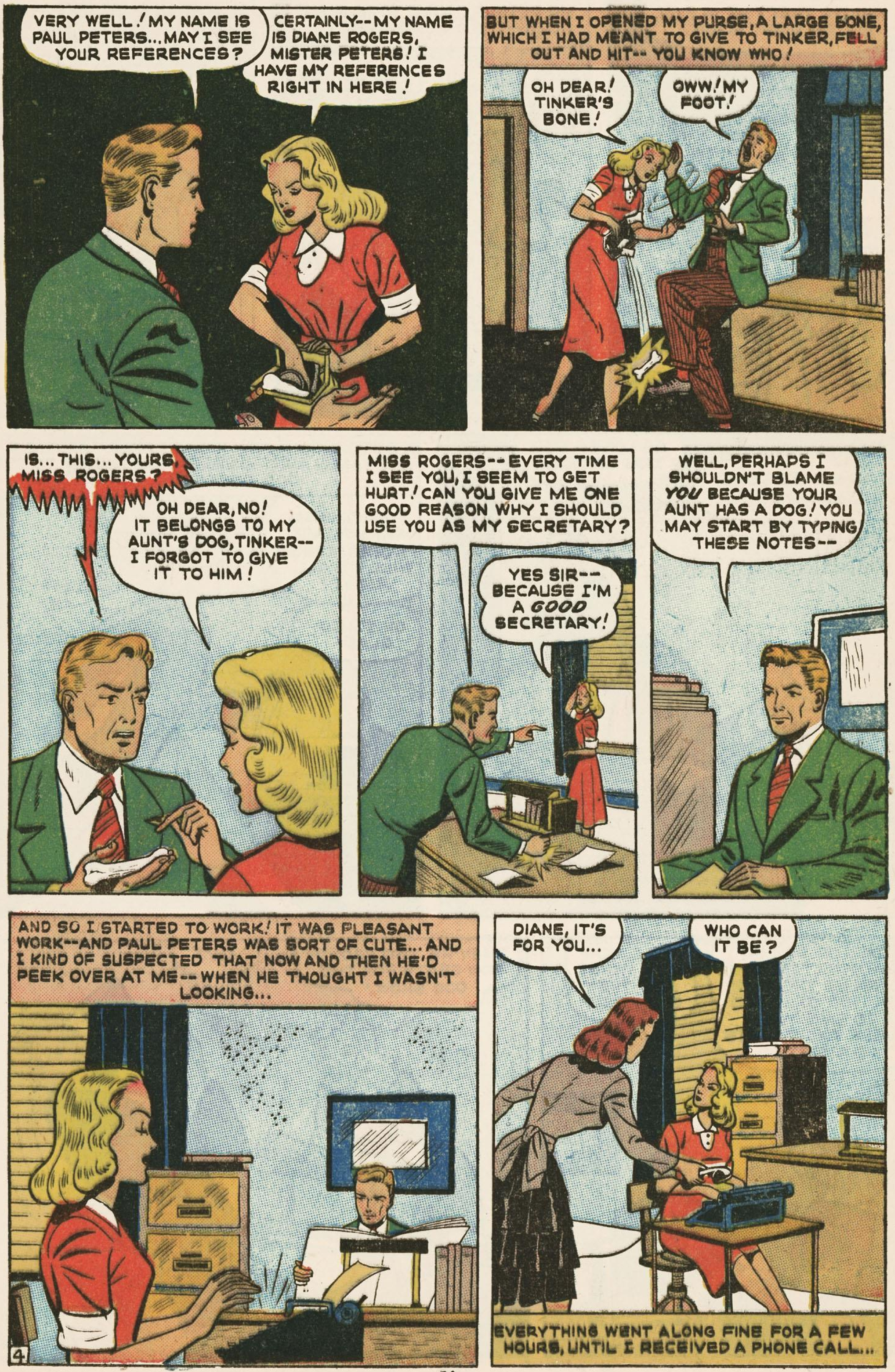

C'MON, FELLER! NOW-- NO FIGHTING TODAY!

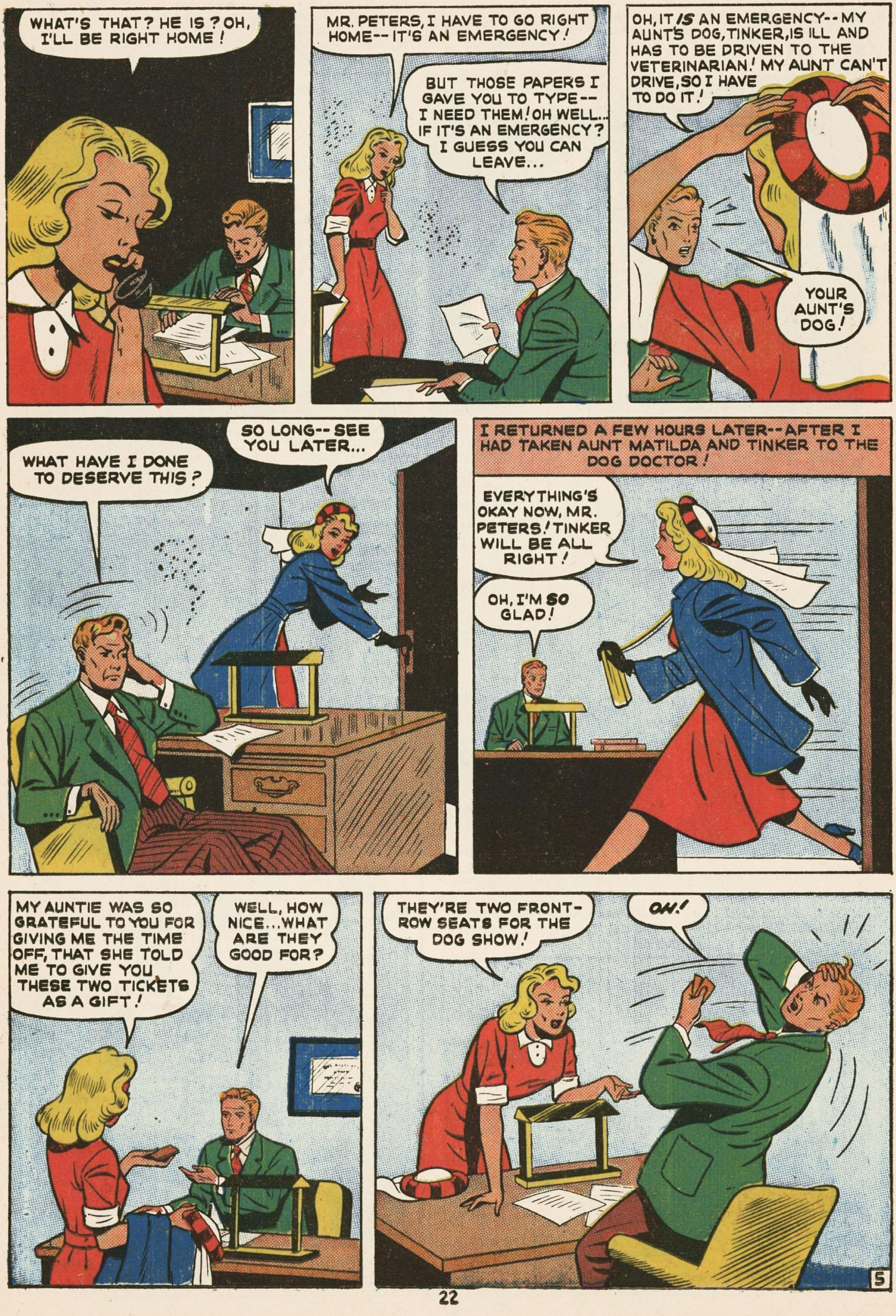

TAKE IT EASY, TINKER! WHAT ARE YOU PULLING FOR?

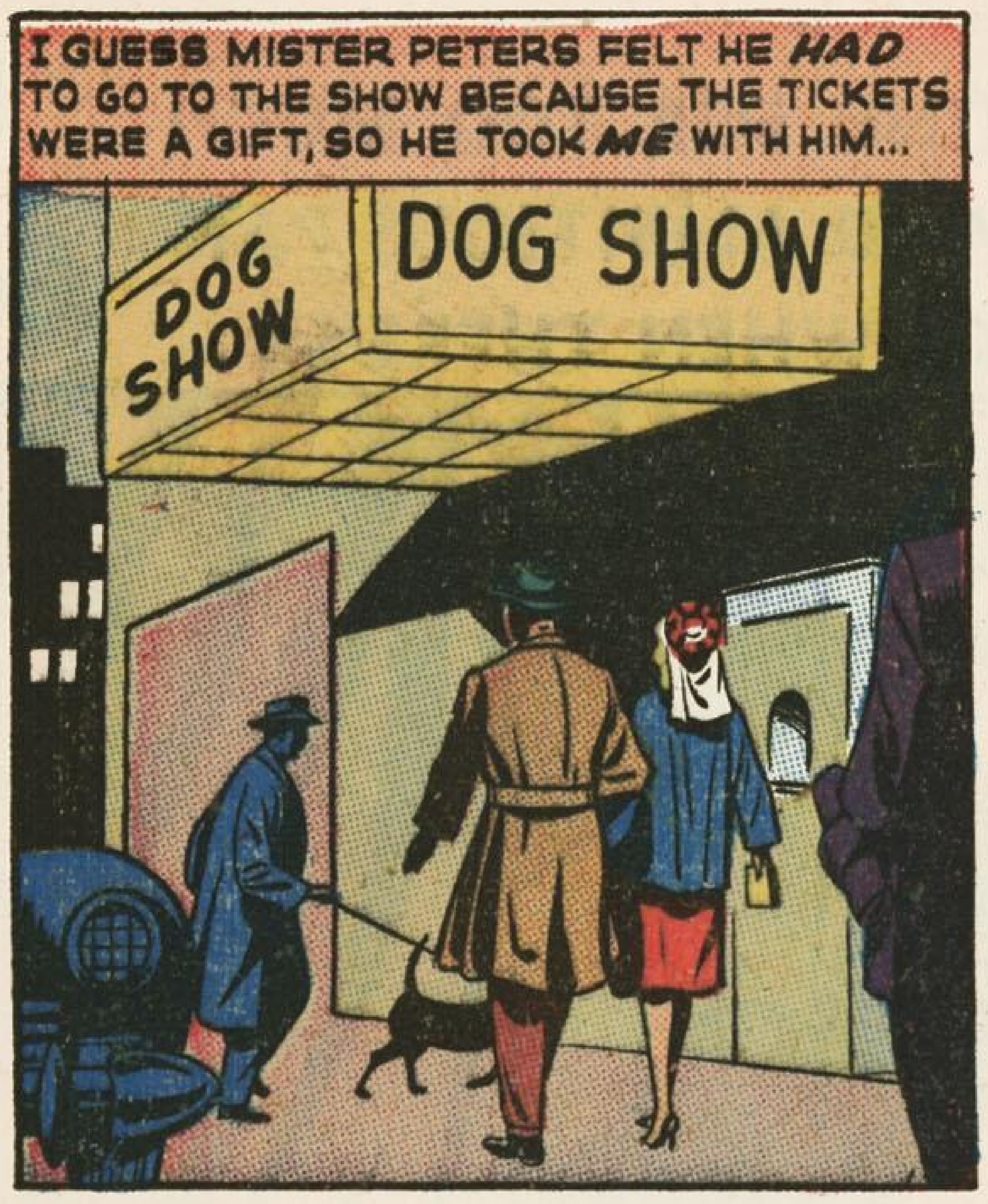

THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOMETHING ABOUT THE COLOR OF THE YOUNG MAN'S SUIT UP AHEAD, BUT, WHATEVER IT WAS, TINKER COULDN'T WAIT TO GET TO HIM!
TINKER! WAIT... TAKE IT EASY!
1

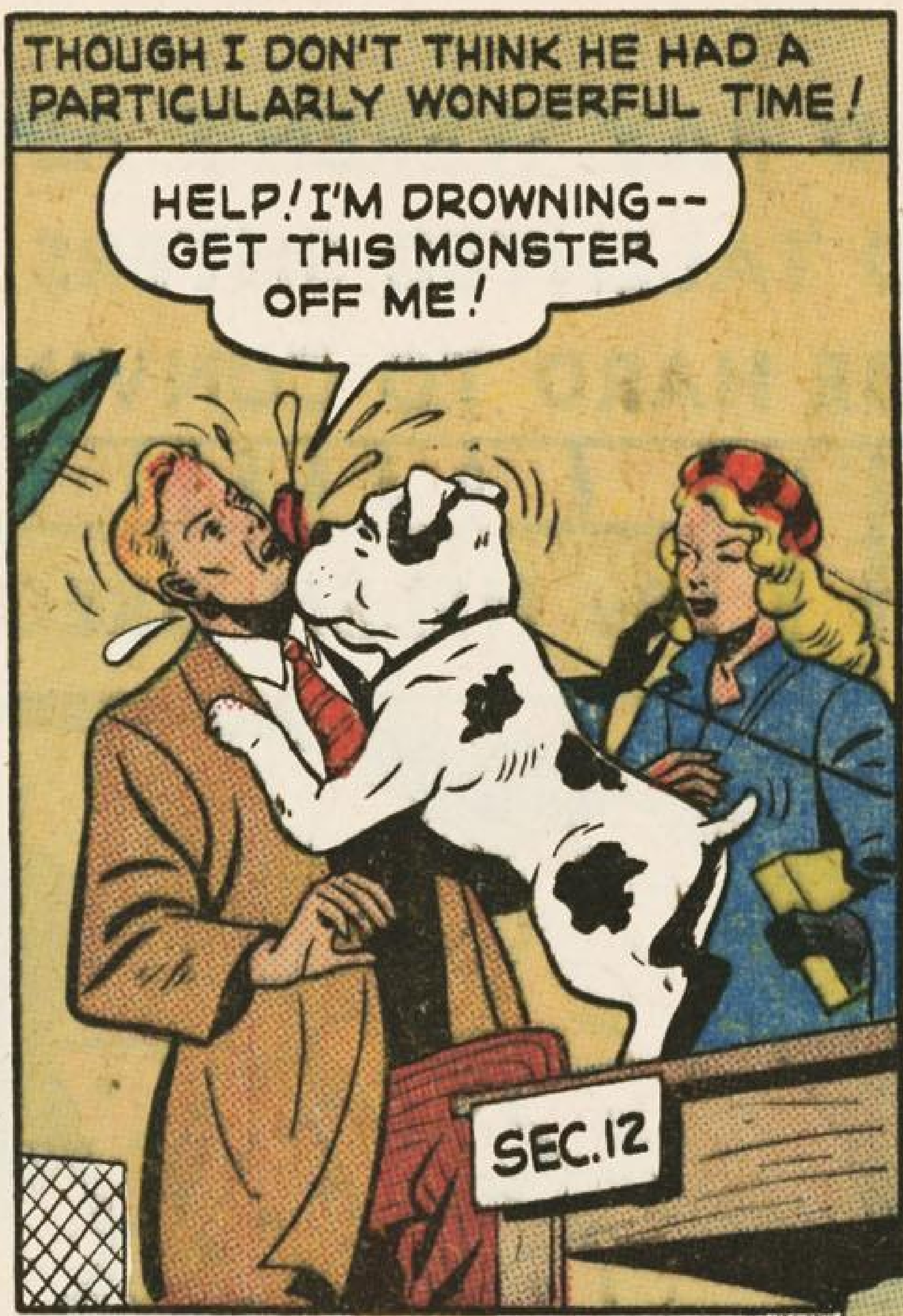
BEFORE I KNEW IT, THE LEASH SLIPPED FROM MY HAND, AND...
TINKER! COME BACK!!
OWW!
GRRR!
TAKE THAT ANIMAL AWAY! HE'S TRYING TO CHEW ME UP!
TINKER! COME HERE!
I'M AWFULLY SORRY-- TINKER DOESN'T USUALLY BITE! I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT HAPPENED!
HE'S A MENACE TO THE COMMUNITY, THAT'S WHAT! HE SHOULD BE *SHOT*!
NOW YOU LOOK HERE! THIS DOG IS *NOT* A MENACE -- AND NO ONE IS GOING TO SHOOT HIM! HE'S JUST A PLAYFUL LITTLE PUPPY!
PLAYFUL, EH? THAT MONSTER ALMOST CHEWED UP MY LEG!
I GATHER THAT YOU DON'T LIKE DOGS!
THAT'S RIGHT-- I HATE 'EM! THEY'RE JUST NUISANCES... I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT PEOPLE SEE IN 'EM!
WELL THEN, THAT'S WHY TINKER TRIED TO BITE YOU-- THEY SAY THAT DOGS CAN *SENSE* WHEN PEOPLE DON'T LIKE THEM! IT SERVES YOU RIGHT! GOOD DAY!
DOGS! BAH! WOMEN-- DOUBLE BAH!
ALL IN ALL-- I THOUGHT HE WAS A *MOST* OBJECTIONABLE MAN!
2

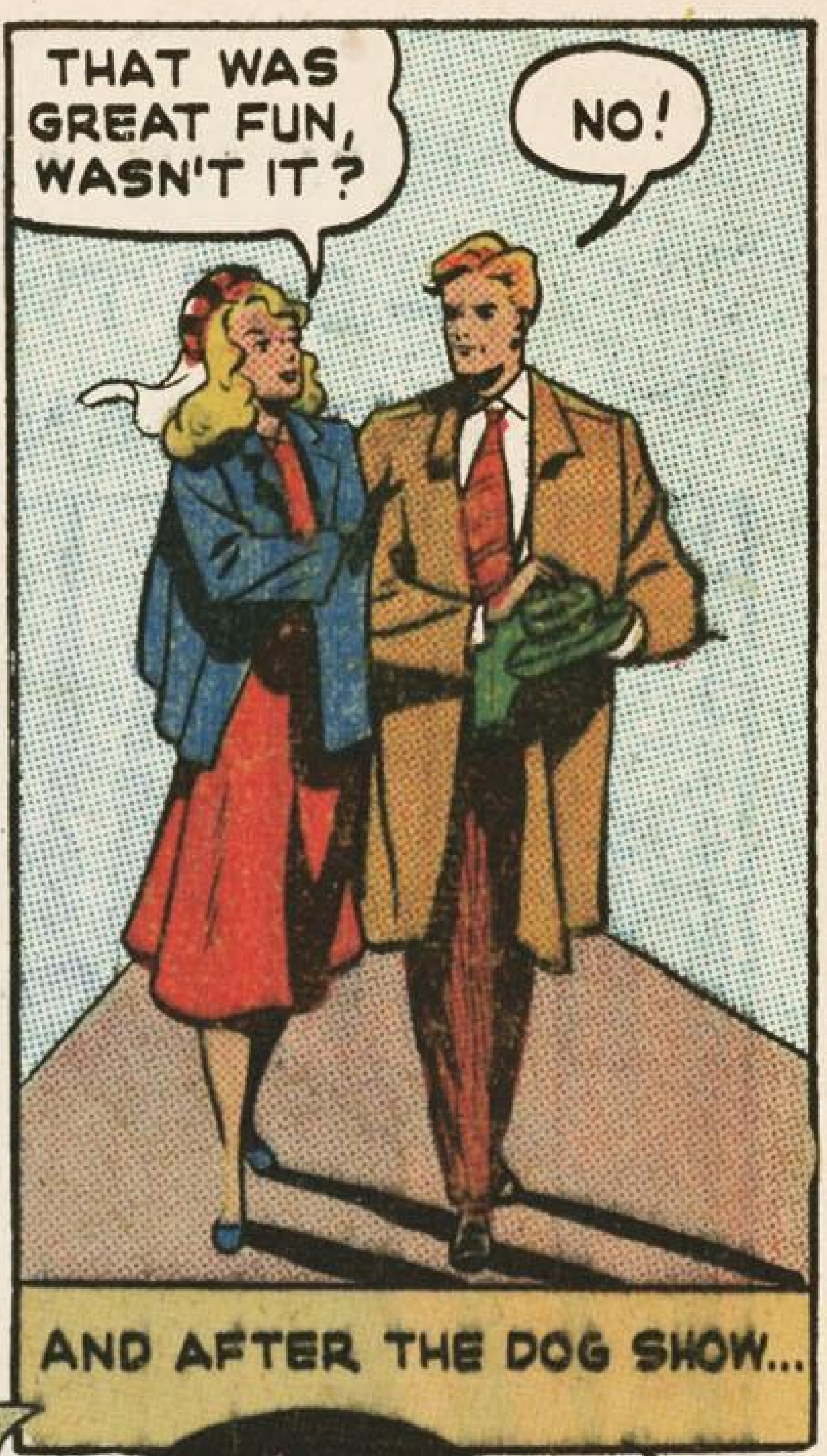
FINALLY, I BROUGHT TINKER BACK TO AUNT MATILDA'S...
BACK SO SOON, DIANE? DID YOU HAVE A NICE WALK.?
YES, AUNT MATILDA! EXCEPT THAT SOME NINCOMPOOP TRIED TO SHOOT TINKER!
WHAT? WHO WOULD TRY TO SHOOT THIS POOR LITTLE PUPPY? DID YOU CALL THE POLICE? WAS HE ARRESTED?
OH AUNTIE-- I WAS EXAGGERATING! NOBODY REALLY TRIED TO SHOOT HIM!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING NOW, DIANE DEAR?
YOUR FAVORITE NIECE IS NOW GOING TO FIND HERSELF A JOB--IF THERE'S ONE TO BE FOUND! I DIDN'T SPEND THOSE LONG MONTHS AT BUSINESS SCHOOL JUST TO LEARN TO TAKE PUPS FOR WALKS!
AND SO I WENT TO MOST OF THE EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES IN TOWN-- LOOKING FOR A SECRETARIAL JOB...
Lee EMPLOYMENT AGENCY
YOUR BOSS, MISTER PETERS, WILL BE HERE IN A COUPLE OF MINUTES! HE CALLED BEFORE TO SAY HE'D BE LATE THIS MORNING...
THANKS VERY MUCH!
FINALLY, I GOT JUST THE POSITION I WAS LOOKING FOR--AND I REPORTED TO MY DESK--TO FIND THAT MY IMMEDIATE SUPERIOR HADN'T COME TO WORK YET...
BUT FINALLY HE ARRIVED! WHAT A SHOCK IT WAS...
I'D HAVE BEEN EARLIER, EXCEPT THAT I WAS ATTACKED BY A BEAST WHO TORE MY TROUSERS AND I HAD TO GO HOME AND PUT ON ANOTHER PAIR!
3
YOU! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I-(GULP!) I'M YOUR NEW SECRETARY!
THAT'S RIGHT-- YOU GUESSED-- IT WAS HE!

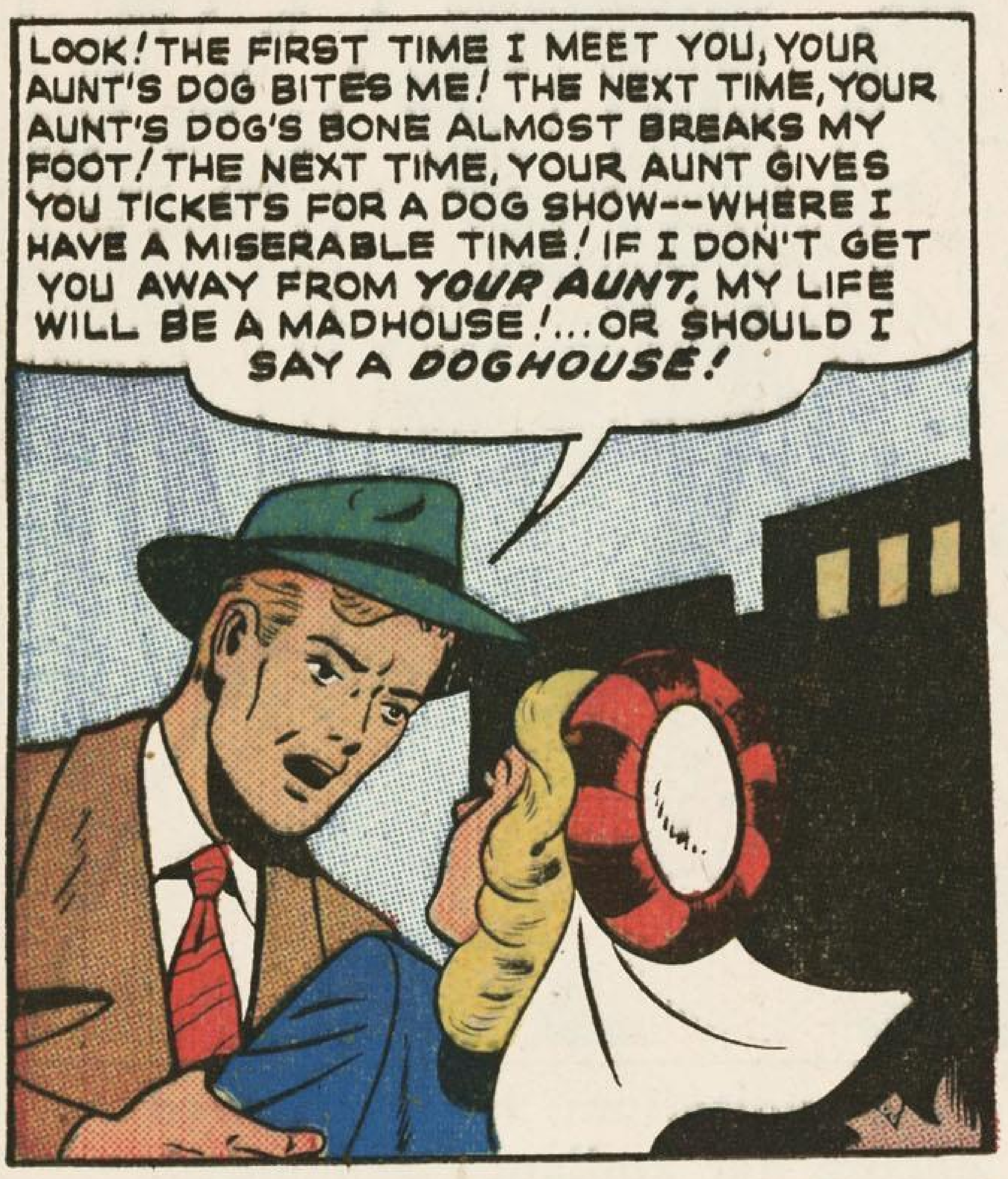

VERY WELL! MY NAME IS PAUL PETERS... MAY I SEE YOUR REFERENCES?
CERTAINLY--MY NAME IS DIANE ROGERS, MISTER PETERS! I HAVE MY REFERENCES RIGHT IN HERE!
BUT WHEN I OPENED MY PURSE, A LARGE BONE, WHICH I HAD MEANT TO GIVE TO TINKER, FELL OUT AND HIT-- YOU KNOW WHO!
OH DEAR! TINKER'S BONE!
OWW! MY FOOT!
IS... THIS... YOURS, MISS ROGERS?
OH DEAR, NO! IT BELONGS TO MY AUNT'S DOG, TINKER-- I FORGOT TO GIVE IT TO HIM!
MISS ROGERS--EVERY TIME I SEE YOU, I SEEM TO GET HURT! CAN YOU GIVE ME ONE GOOD REASON WHY I SHOULD USE YOU AS MY SECRETARY?
YES SIR-- BECAUSE I'M A *GOOD* SECRETARY!
WELL, PERHAPS I SHOULDN'T BLAME *YOU* BECAUSE YOUR AUNT HAS A DOG! YOU MAY START BY TYPING THESE NOTES--
AND SO I STARTED TO WORK! IT WAS PLEASANT WORK--AND PAUL PETERS WAS SORT OF CUTE... AND I KIND OF SUSPECTED THAT NOW AND THEN HE'D PEEK OVER AT ME-- WHEN HE THOUGHT I WASN'T LOOKING...
4
DIANE, IT'S FOR YOU...
WHO CAN IT BE?
EVERYTHING WENT ALONG FINE FOR A FEW HOURS, UNTIL I RECEIVED A PHONE CALL...

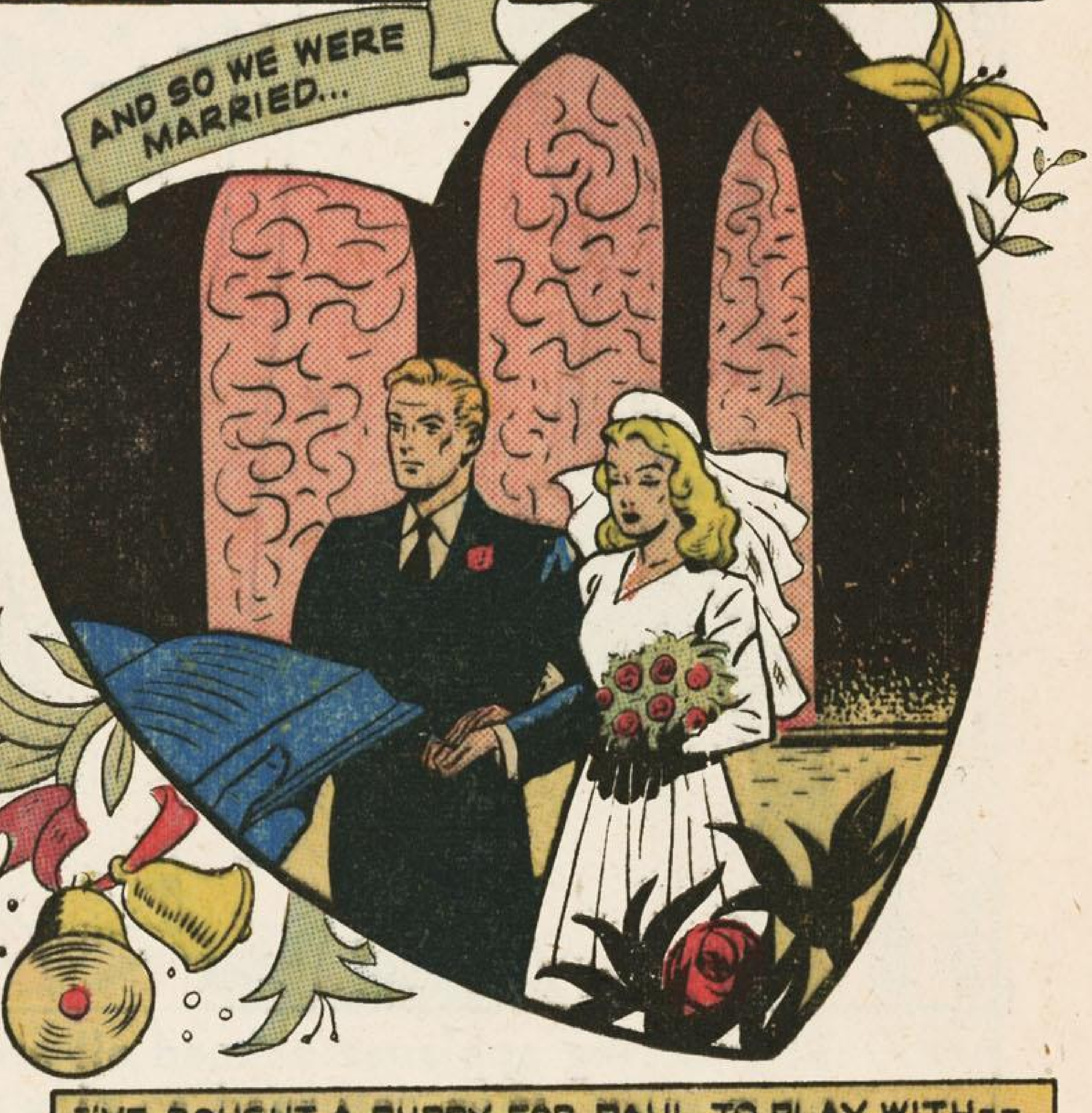

WHAT'S THAT? HE IS? OH, I'LL BE RIGHT HOME!
MR. PETERS, I HAVE TO GO RIGHT HOME-- IT'S AN EMERGENCY!
BUT THOSE PAPERS I GAVE YOU TO TYPE-- I NEED THEM! OH WELL... IF IT'S AN EMERGENCY? I GUESS YOU CAN LEAVE...
OH, IT *IS* AN EMERGENCY-- MY AUNT'S DOG, TINKER, IS ILL AND HAS TO BE DRIVEN TO THE VETERINARIAN! MY AUNT CAN'T DRIVE, SO I HAVE TO DO IT!
YOUR AUNT'S DOG!
WHAT HAVE I DONE TO DESERVE THIS?
SO LONG-- SEE YOU LATER...
I RETURNED A FEW HOURS LATER--AFTER I HAD TAKEN AUNT MATILDA AND TINKER TO THE DOG DOCTOR!
EVERYTHING'S OKAY NOW, MR. PETERS! TINKER WILL BE ALL RIGHT!
OH, I'M **SO** GLAD!
MY AUNTIE WAS SO GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR GIVING ME THE TIME OFF, THAT SHE TOLD ME TO GIVE YOU THESE TWO TICKETS AS A GIFT!
WELL, HOW NICE... WHAT ARE THEY GOOD FOR?
THEY'RE TWO FRONT-ROW SEATS FOR THE DOG SHOW!
OH!
5

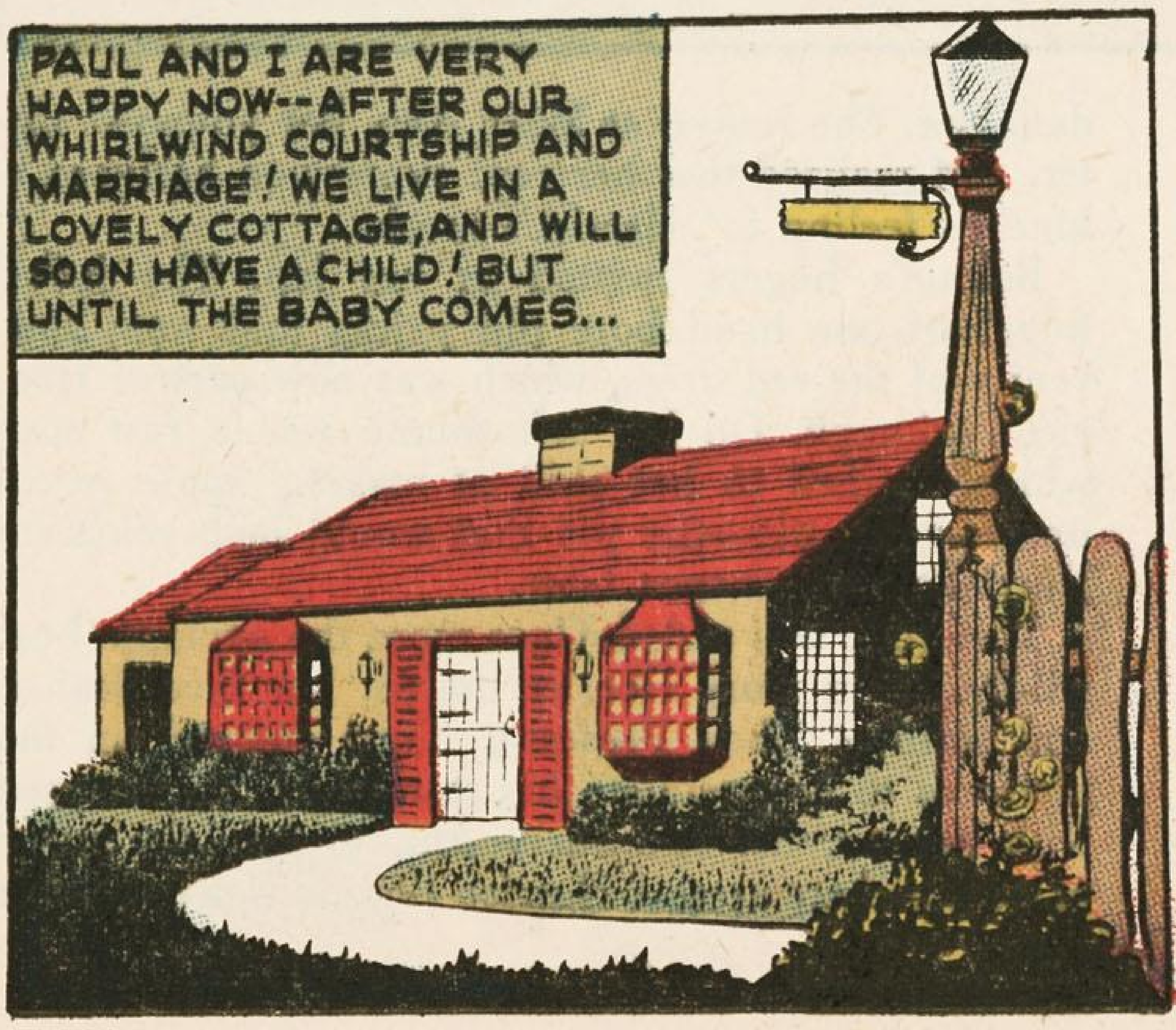

I GUESS MISTER PETERS FELT HE *HAD* TO GO TO THE SHOW BECAUSE THE TICKETS WERE A GIFT, SO HE TOOK *ME* WITH HIM...
DOG SHOW
DOG SHOW

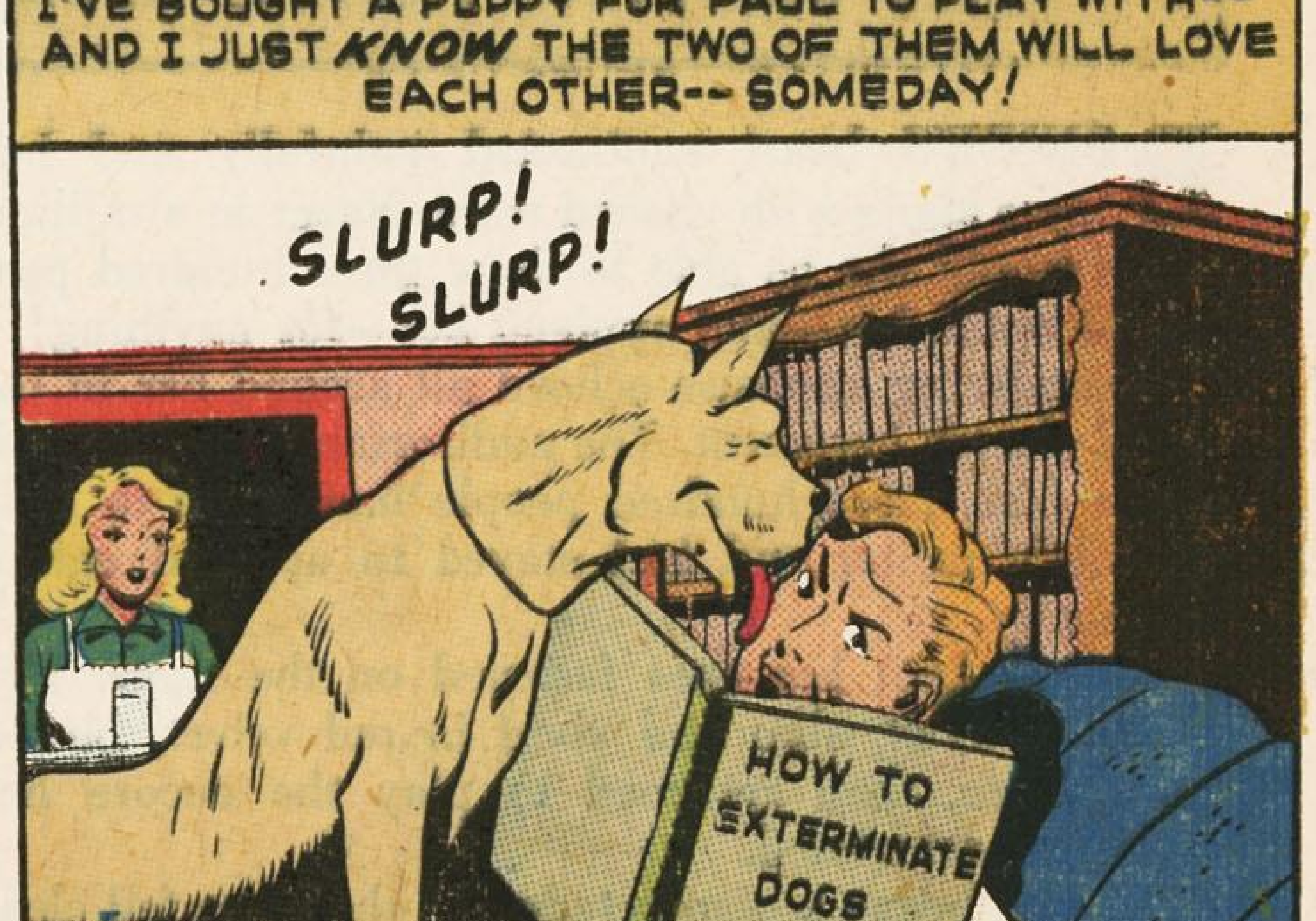

THOUGH I DON'T THINK HE HAD A PARTICULARLY WONDERFUL TIME!
HELP! I'M DROWNING-- GET THIS MONSTER OFF ME!
SEC.12


THAT WAS GREAT FUN, WASN'T IT?
NO!
AND AFTER THE DOG SHOW...


LOOK! THE FIRST TIME I MEET YOU, YOUR AUNT'S DOG BITES ME! THE NEXT TIME, YOUR AUNT'S DOG'S BONE ALMOST BREAKS MY FOOT! THE NEXT TIME, YOUR AUNT GIVES YOU TICKETS FOR A DOG SHOW--WHERE I HAVE A MISERABLE TIME! IF I DON'T GET YOU AWAY FROM *YOUR AUNT*, MY LIFE WILL BE A MADHOUSE!...OR SHOULD I SAY A *DOGHOUSE*!


AND SO WE WERE MARRIED...

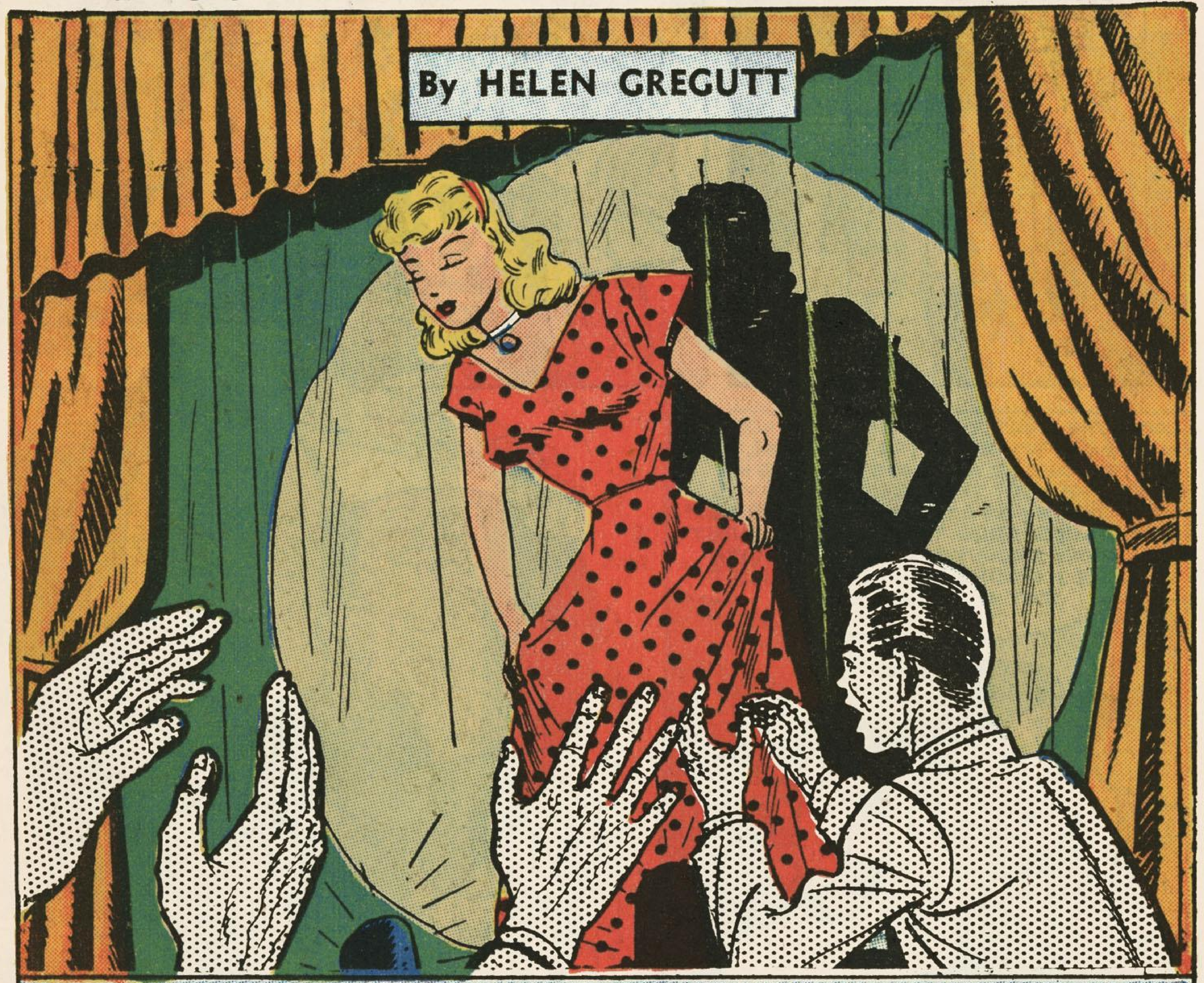

PAUL AND I ARE VERY HAPPY NOW--AFTER OUR WHIRLWIND COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE! WE LIVE IN A LOVELY COTTAGE, AND WILL SOON HAVE A CHILD! BUT UNTIL THE BABY COMES...


I'VE BOUGHT A PUPPY FOR PAUL TO PLAY WITH-- AND I JUST *KNOW* THE TWO OF THEM WILL LOVE EACH OTHER-- SOMEDAY!
SLURP!
SLURP!
HOW TO EXTERMINATE DOGS
THE END

BONNIE AND RAY WEREN'T ASKING FOR TOO MUCH — BUT TWO TALENTED SISTERS AND AMBITIOUS PARENTS CAN BE HARD TO CONVINCE WHEN THERE'S . . .

MUSIC IN THE AIR!

By HELEN GREGUTT



Thundering applause echoed all around the auditorium. Harriet bowed once more, then returned to play the encore her audience demanded.

BONNIE'S heart contracted painfully and her eyes stung with unshed tears. Never in a million years would she be able to draw three hundred people to watch her—and applaud her—for anything!

Thundering applause echoed all around her in the small church basement. The auditorium was jammed. More than three hundred people had come to hear Harriet's recital and had stayed to applaud enthusiastically.

Bonnie kept her eyes fastened on the stage. Her sister, Harriet, slim and vivid in red velvet, bowed once more, then returned to play the encore her audience demanded.

Harriet began a piano etude and the notes fell clear and silvery. Bonnie stole a glance at her mother and father, who sat proudly listening to their eldest daughter. She looked at Mary Ann, her youngest sister, and realized that her rapt expression betrayed a kindred feeling for Harriet's music.

Bonnie's fingers twisted in her lap. The index finger of one hand bore pin pricks that were souvenirs of the red dress, which was now part of Harriet's triumph. On her left thumb was a raw scar which testified to her skill at making apple pecan upside-down pie—the pie that would help celebrate Harriet's performance later.

The etude was ended. Once more the applause beat wildly. Once more Harriet bowed, her face flushed and smiling. Then Professor Trevi stepped on the platform to congratulate his star pupil. Bonnie rose with her parents and Mary Ann to join the surge of well-wishers around Harriet. Bonnie was conscious of her mother squeezing her hand and saying with concern, "You next, Bonnie."

"Maybe next year," Dad whispered in her ear reassuringly.

Mixed emotions tore Bonnie and now she wanted to cry in earnest. How could they be so blind? Why did they persist in thinking of her as a musician? Harriet would certainly be a concert pianist some day. And maybe Mary Ann would be, too. Mary Ann adored music and all she needed to become successful was to learn concentration and patience. Bonnie gave her head a hard shake. It was difficult to be caught in the middle—the only unmusical member of a musical family!

Without realizing it, she found herself next to Harriet. Bonnie forgot her envy and threw her arms impulsively around her older sister. "You were wonderful and you looked lovely."

"Thanks to you," Harriet smiled.

Bonnie felt the healing warmth of acknowledgment as she was pushed beyond her sister by congratulating friends.

Suddenly, she found herself looking up at Ray, who stood back against the wings. He was grinning at her.

"Wasn't she terrific?" Bonnie asked.

"Mmm," Ray agreed. "But I'm a lowbrow. I'm holding out for a piece of that pie you promised!"

Bonnie felt her heart lift as she smiled into Ray's brown eyes.

"Can I drive you home now?" he asked.

"That's a wonderful idea." Bonnie tugged at his hand. "We can be the welcoming committee."

She tied a bright scarf around her short curly hair and drew on her coat. Out in Ray's car, she slid low in the front seat, warming her hands and feet by the heater. It was wonderful to ride with Ray. Alone with him she could let herself dream the dream that was dearest to her heart. She could dream past next year, when she and Ray would be seniors, to the year when they would both enter State University . . . Four years of college together . . . Four years of preparing for the kind of career she wanted. It was her secret, shared only with Ray, but when the time came, the family couldn't object. They just *couldn't!*

"My new catalogue came today," Bonnie said aloud. "And the letter answered all my questions."

"You'll know that catalogue by heart long before it's time for you to register," Ray teased her.

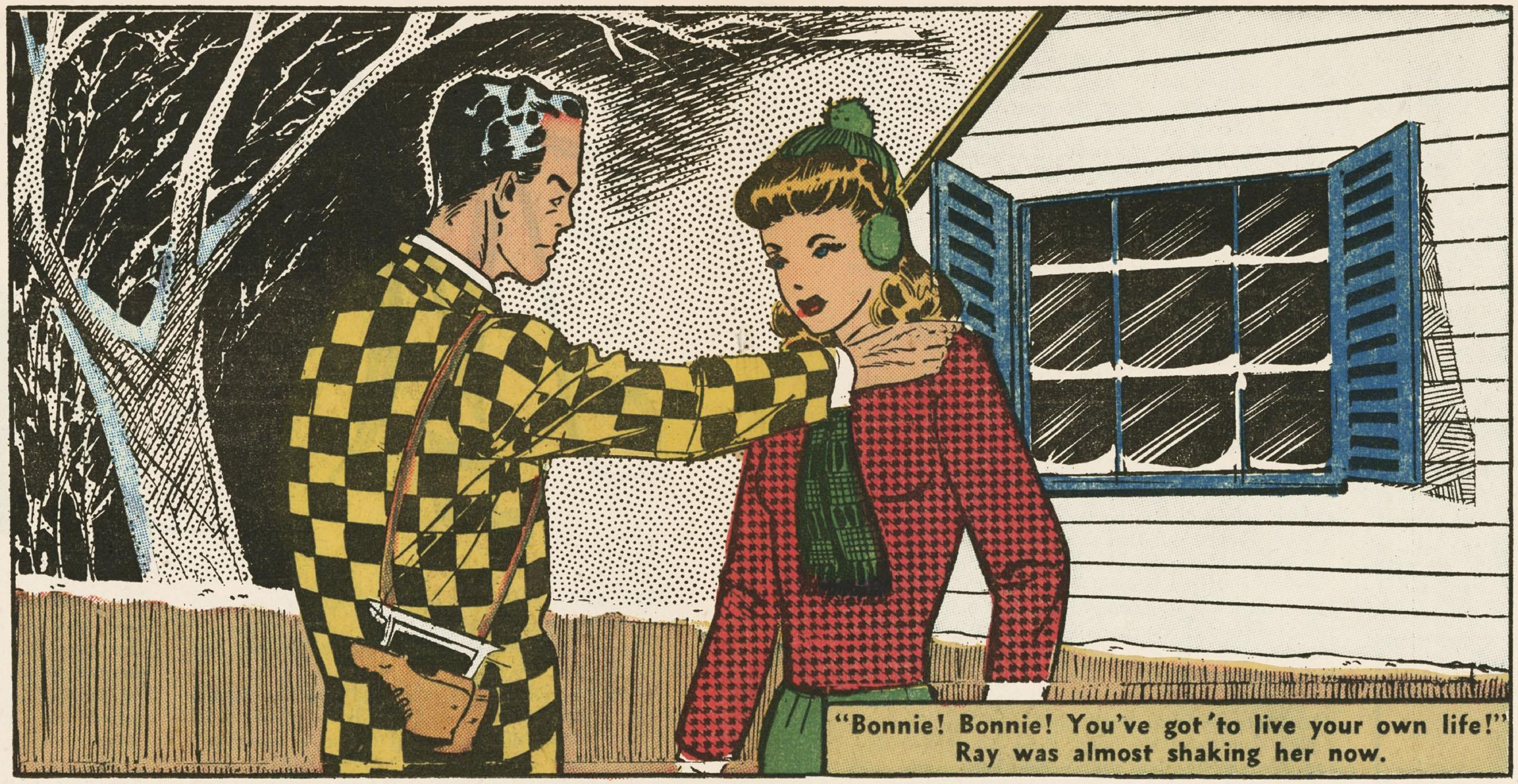
Laughter bubbled inside Bonnie. "I'll be able to earn my room and board easily," she announced gaily. "And I can earn almost all of the tuition in the summertime. What's more, the Home Economics course gets better and better, and," she ended breathlessly, "State sounds like loads of fun!"

Just for a second, Ray took his hand from the wheel and squeezed hers. "And no more music," he added quietly.

Bonnie loved him for understanding. "No more music," she echoed, but loyalty to the family was second nature. "Oh, Ray, they're so wonderful and so talented but it will be marvelous to get away where I can be me!" And where I won't need to feel insignificant and unimportant because I'm no good with etudes, she thought to herself.

Ray nodded, as he parked the car outside the Andrews' house. The old-fashioned frame house had been home to Bonnie for as long as she could remember. And always there had been Ray, who was in and out of the house so much he was almost part of the family.

They put away their wraps and Bonnie stole a quick glance at herself in the hall mirror. Even in the dim hall light her eyes were bright. The cold air had stung color into her cheeks, and she knew she looked pretty. She ran a comb quickly through the feather cut that framed her face.



"Bonnie! Bonnie! You've got to live your own life!" Ray was almost shaking her now.

"We've got time for an inspection tour before they arrive, General!" Bonnie said.

"Yes, sir," Ray snapped to attention.

They took a quick look around. In the living room, the fire was laid, ready for the match which Ray touched to it, as Bonnie switched on the lights. In the dining room, the buffet was ready.

Bonnie and Ray were in kitchen starting the coffee and slicing bread when Mother, Dad, Harriet and Mary Ann arrived. Professor Trevi and a few close friends came along, too.

For a long time, the guests ate and talked and laughed and relived Harriet's truimph.

Professor Trevi was the last to leave. "Graduation for Harriet in a few months," he said to Mr. Andrews, "and then on to bigger things!"

Mr. Andrews nodded proudly in assent. "Harriet's fingers make a special kind of magic."

The Andrews lingered around the open fire until it burned low. Bonnie only half listened to the talk, because—as always—it was of music, and—as always—she felt excluded. Sitting in the circle of firelight her mind drifted . . . from thoughts of Ray . . . to State . . . and back to Harriet's glorious recital. With a start she remembered her family's festive mood.

"Will Professor Trevi be able to get you the scholarship for St. Alban's Academy next fall?" Bonnie asked Harriet.

Harriet's red velvet reflected the embers as she sat forward, but her eyes turned quickly to her parents and lost some of their glow.

Bonnie didn't miss the glance they all exchanged.

"Let's tell Bonnie now," Mother said.

Bonnie knew something was troubling them. Fear caught at her. "Tell me what?" Her voice was little more than a whisper.

"Well, after graduation," Dad said, "Harriet's going to stay on here for a year to continue her studies with the Professor."

Bonnie breathed again, but almost at once she experienced remorse. It must mean that Harriet had not won the scholarship and she would be cruelly disappointed. Bonnie threw her sister a look of affectionate understanding. "It will be swell to have you around for my senior year!"

"But that's not all," Mother cut in. "After you graduate, Bonnie, you and Harriet will go to St. Alban's together and you can share an apartment near the Academy."

The smile froze on Bonnie's face.

Mary Ann rescued her from the threatening silence. "I *would* be the youngest," she wailed.

"Only a year and a half after that until you join them," Dad reassured Mary Ann.

This was the time to speak. Bonnie's heart beat fast and her throat felt thick. She must tell them that she didn't want to go to St. Alban's; that she didn't want music as a career. She wanted to go to State with Ray, to study Home Economics. All the words crowded to her lips, but no sound issued. Mother's face in the fire glow seemed almost as young as Harriet's.

"All my girls together in St. Alban's studying at the Academy . . ." Mother turned to them with tears glistening in her eyes. "I never got to be more than a grade school music teacher, but . . ." Her voice caught.

"You were the best music teacher this town ever had," Bonnie said warmly.

"And Dad has been its best choir master and organist," Mother laughed, forgetting her sorrow. "We'd all better get some sleep."

The moment had passed.

Upstairs in the room she shared with Harriet and Mary Ann, Bonnie undressed in silence, but just before she climbed into bed, she slid the new catalogue from State to the back of her desk drawer.

She didn't go to sleep for hours. When she woke, she felt exhausted. As she splashed cold water on her face, determination to tell the family how she felt rose in her again.

She would speak to them at breakfast. But when the time came Harriet was pale and Bonnie noticed Mother's concerned glances. Dad was worrying outloud about bills. Bonnie's heart sank. *How could she tell them?* In a moment, they all rose to begin a typically busy Andrews' Saturday. Dad worked to make extra money. Mother did the week's shopping in town. The girls cleaned house and Bonnie baked for the weekend. She moved through her chores swiftly and efficiently, grateful for the opportunity to be active—and alone . . . to think things through without having to talk.

When Ray picked her up to go ice skating, her decision was made. She was glad to escape the house and the sound of Harriet's piano, playing music in a minor, melancholy key. The bright winter sunshine felt good. She thought how wonderful it should have felt to walk hand in hand with Ray through the crisp air—but Bonnie couldn't shake her own mood, which was as somber as Harriet's music.

"What's the matter, Bonnie?" Ray asked, sensing her uneasiness.

She couldn't beat about the bush with him. He knew her too well. "I'm not going to State," she blurted, keeping her eyes fixed straight ahead.

"Not going to State!" Ray cried incredulously. "Why not?"

She would have liked to keep walking as she talked, but Ray's hands were on her elbows, forcing her to stand still—to look into his intent brown eyes. It made words even more difficult. The phrases came out haltingly, almost incoherently, but Bonnie continued her explanation. At last it was over. Ray's face was as frozen as the fields around them.

"Didn't you tell them how you felt about music and a career?" he asked, his voice quiet but insistent.

Bonnie shook her head. "How could I?"

"How *couldn't* you!" he exploded. He was almost shaking her now. "Bonnie, Bonnie! You've got to live your own life! You can't make yourself be a mediocre musician just to keep your family happy! They wouldn't want you to try if they knew how you disliked it!"

"You don't understand," Bonnie kept repeating stubbornly. Her teeth chattered and even in their gay mittens her hands felt unaccountably cold. She could never make Ray understand how she felt about her family, but she was sure in her heart that she was right. Ray didn't know about how close they always had been . . . About how hard Dad and Mother had worked to give them a chance . . . About how much the scholarship meant to Harriet. Bonnie knew she couldn't throw another monkey wrench in their carefully laid plans.

In the end, Ray said again flatly. "I don't understand—and I think it's wrong." He made a last appeal. "St. Alban's is so far from State. I'll only be able to see you in the summertime."

"We have all next year." Bonnie's voice was low. Hadn't she thought of that? Didn't he know? Some might laugh at the idea of separation being tragic at sixteen, but Bonnie knew with dread what the long years without Ray would be like.

She was still thinking of it Monday as she walked home from school. On the surface, the weekend had been as usual. Only inwardly she had felt Ray's withdrawal, and she had known that it would be that way from now on. Harriet, too, had been strangely preoccupied. Although not a word was said about the scholarship, Bonnie was sure it was responsible for Harriet's detachment. She almost knocked down a man as she turned a corner, she was so absorbed with her thoughts.

"Oh! Professor Trevi!" she exclaimed.

He rescued a bundle that slipped from her arm. "Let me carry these," he offered. "I go part way with you."

"We're so proud of Harriet," Bonnie said, making conversation.

"I, too," the Professor answered simply. "I have never had a pupil of such promise." Almost ruefully he added, "Certainly I have never before had one who progressed beyond what I could teach. It's too bad about—" he shook his head. "But then she is young, and I am an old man who talks too much."

Bonnie digested his words slowly. *What was he trying to say?* "Too bad about what?" she pressed him. "The scholarship?"

He shrugged. "The scholarship is hers anytime."

They reached Bonnie's house.

The Professor returned her packages and tipped his hat. “Good-by, Bonnie,” he said, leaving her before she could form the questions that crowded into her mind. She was completely confused. Everything was mixed up—and somehow she seemed to be the unwilling center of the mix-up!

At home, she deposited her packages and went upstairs. Harriet was standing before the bedroom mirror, awkwardly pinning the dress she was to wear to the Senior Prom. Bonnie took the pins from her sister's hands and went to work, draping and tucking with skilled fingers.

“I just saw Professor Trevi,” Bonnie said.

She could feel Harriet stiffen and she caught the quick, alarmed glance Harriet shot at her.

“Did . . . did he have anything to say?”

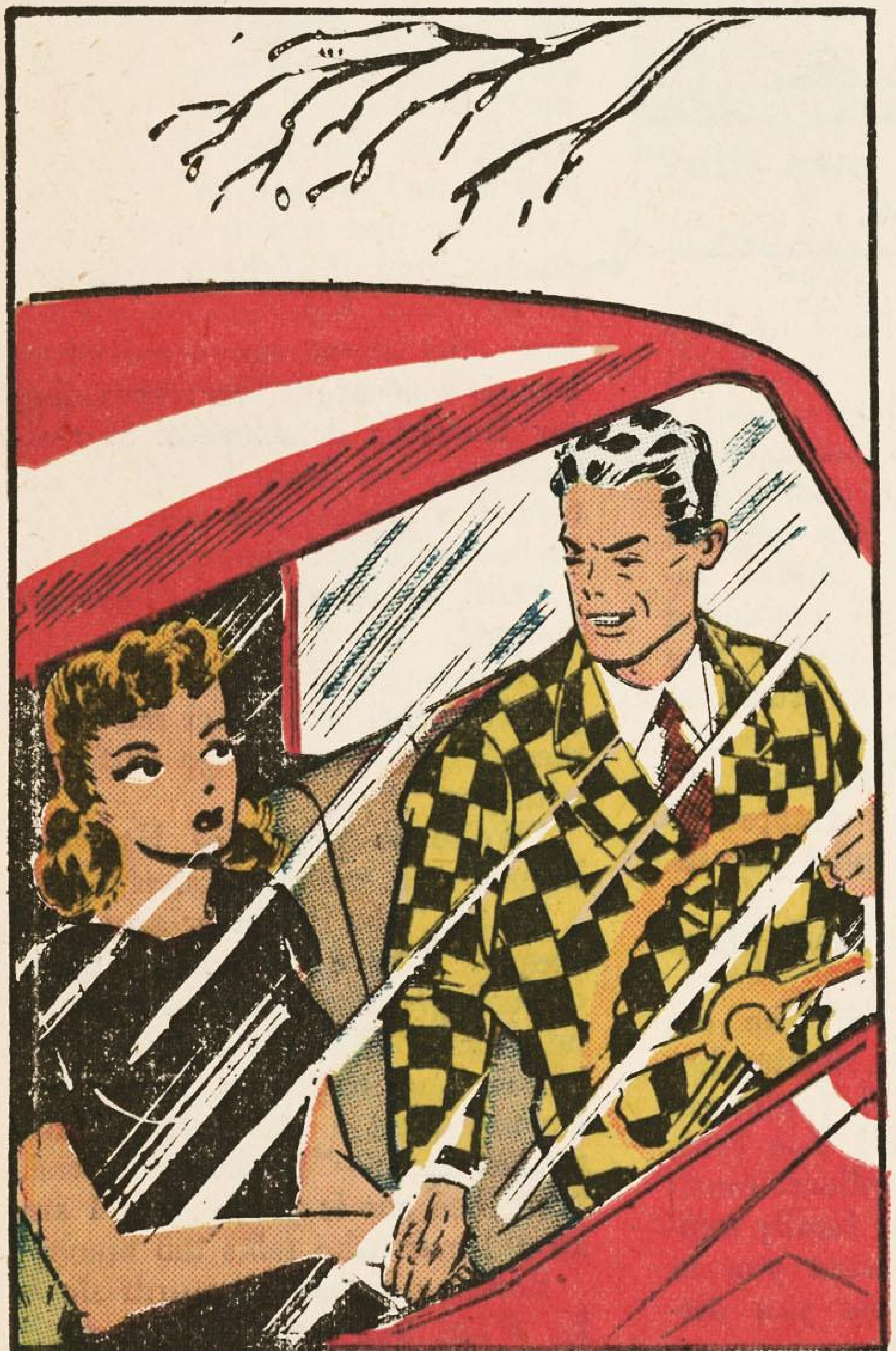
“Just that you could have the scholarship to St. Alban's any time.”

“Oh, that!” Harriet was struggling to sound casual.

Bonnie backed away from her. “Why aren't you taking it next year?”

Harriet groped for words. “Well, I need another year's preparation with the Professor.”

Bonnie shook her head. “He also said you were the only pupil he'd ever had who progressed beyond what he could teach.”



Just for a second, Ray took his hand from the wheel and squeezed hers. “And no more music,” he added quietly.

Harriet turned sharply. “He's an old man who talks too much.”

“He said that, too,” Bonnie chuckled, turning Harriet around again. “Now what's the real reason?” Bonnie waited, but Harriet remained silent. “It's because of me, isn't it?”

Harriet finally answered. “Mother and Dad thought . . . well, they thought that I've been the center of attention too long. You ought to have your turn. With the scholarship presentation next year and getting me off to St. Alban's, I would still be in the limelight—and during your senior year.” The mirror reflected Harriet's face—full of concern. “This way, you can have your senior year and your recital, and we'll share the excitement of going away together.”

“But I don't want a recital,” Bonnie said gently, trying to control herself. “And I don't want to go to the Academy.” How wonderful it was to say the words aloud at last!

Harriet's face was a study. “But your music?”

“I want to go to State to study Home Economics and be with Ray. I'm no musician.”

“But Mother and Dad thought—”

Bonnie put the last pins in place and stood up. “Mother and Dad thought they were protecting me. I thought I was protecting them. And you . . .” Her voice choked between laughter and tears. “Oh, Harriet, we'll set it straight. When the folks come home, you tell them. And keep them in the living room until I call. Then they'll understand!” She kissed her sister impulsively and ran from the room, a plan shaping in her mind. First she phoned Ray, and then she tore into the kitchen, bolting the door behind her.

Bonnie worked like a demon, but with swift, happy fingers . . . At last she rang the bell to call them all to dinner.

Mother, Dad, Harriet, Mary Ann and Ray trooped into the dining room. For a moment they stood in silence, looking at the beautifully set table. From the golden crispness of the fried chicken, to the flawlessness of the tiered layer cake on the serving table, it looked like a picture. Their faces, glowing in the candlelight, reflected admiration.

“Here's my etude,” Bonnie said with quiet triumph, gesturing toward the intricate salad, the clover leaf rolls, the vegetables melting in butter.

With a full heart she waited for their reaction. Dad spoke first. “You make a different kind of magic with your fingers,” he said slowly.

Then the silence was shattered by their praising voices. Now they knew and—best of all—they understood.

It was Ray who added the right touch. Suddenly he burst into applause. Bonnie looked at him and in that moment she lost all envy of Harriet and her audience of three hundred—or of the three thousand who would certainly cheer her one day. Here was Bonnie's audience. For the first time Bonnie felt exhilarated. She felt music in the air. She had created a symphony in candlelight . . . and silver . . . and rich food. And all she wanted was the approval of her family . . . and Ray's applause.

THE END

FOOD FOR FUN

STEW SUPREME . . .

Here's a marvelous kidney stew that's richer, more flavorful and more delicious than any other of its kind. Try it at your next "brunch."

Skin, clean and cut six pairs of veal kidneys into one-inch pieces. Then let them soak in salted water for three hours. Wipe the kidneys dry, put them in a bowl, and squeeze the juice of a lemon over them. Chop fine three seeded peppers, and two Spanish onions.

Heat three tablespoons of olive oil in a kettle. Dredge the kidneys lightly with seasoned flour, and put them into the kettle. When they are browned, add the chopped onion and pepper, cover and cook slowly for ten minutes. Add three cupfuls of strong beef stock or broth. Taste the stew for seasoning, and let it simmer for half an hour.

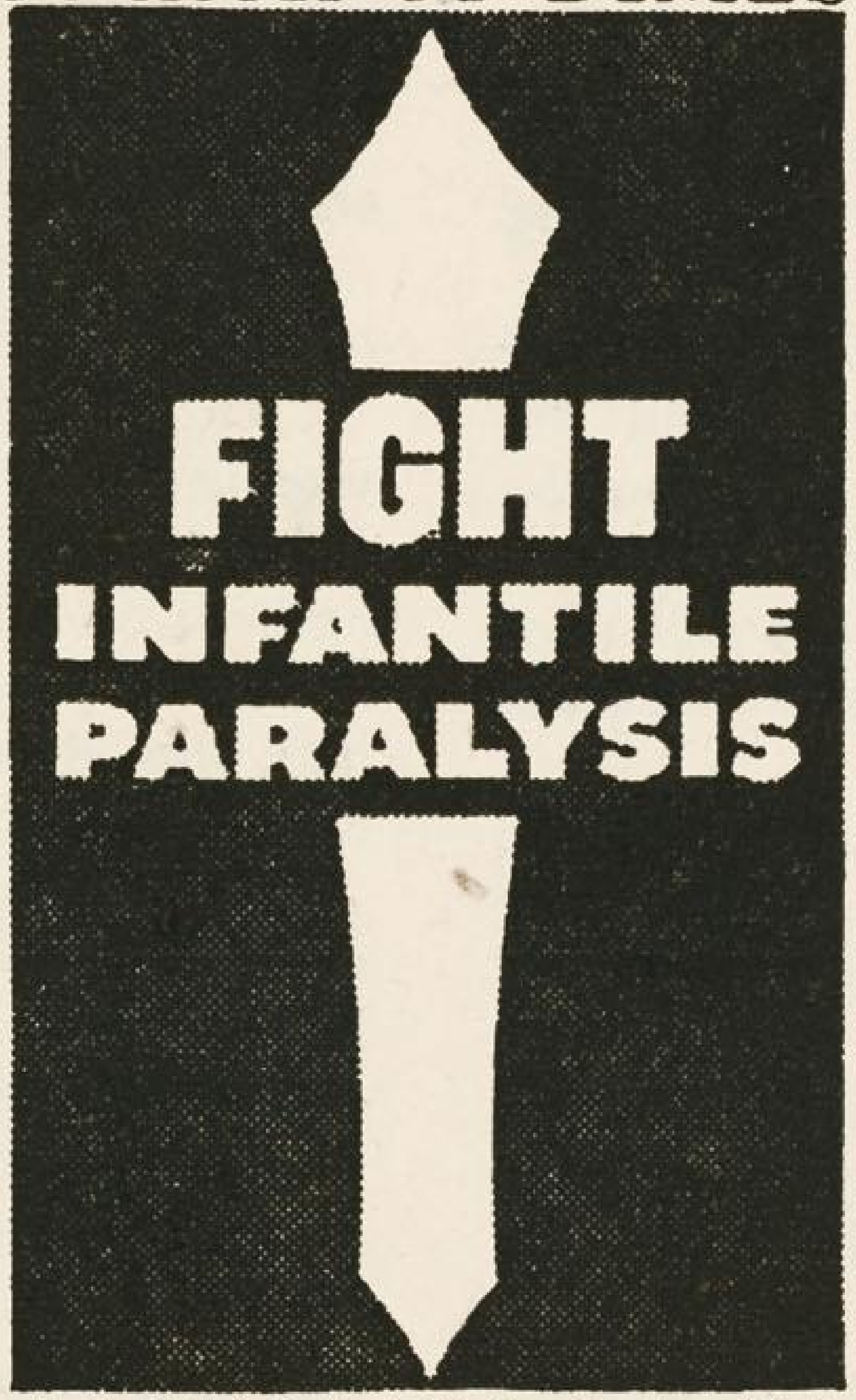
Incidentally, it's wonderful with hot biscuits or waffles!

BEEF STROGONOFF . . .

Making real beef strogonoff is a big job and takes a lot of time. But when you use a pressure cooker, you can have strogonoff in a little over five minutes! And you'll impress your family with your superb culinary abilities!

Melt two tablespoons of butter or margarine in your cooker. Cut a pound of steak into shoestring strips, and brown these in the fat with a tablespoon of chopped onion. Stir in half a teaspoon of salt, a dash of pepper and 2½ tablespoons of flour.

MARCH OF DIMES



JANUARY 14-31

PUFFY POPOVERS . . .

If you've ever made popovers, you know that the recipe you use has a lot to do with their success. This one is a sure winner—and it's simple, too!

Sift a cup of flour with ¼ of a teaspoon of salt. Add *gradually* a cup of milk, two well-beaten eggs, and a tablespoon of melted butter. Beat hard with a rotary beater or electric mixer for eight minutes. Then pour into greased, red-hot popover pans. Bake at 400 degrees for half an hour; then reduce the heat to 325 degrees and bake for 15 minutes more.

Don't open the oven door while the popovers are baking, and the result should really be something to talk about!

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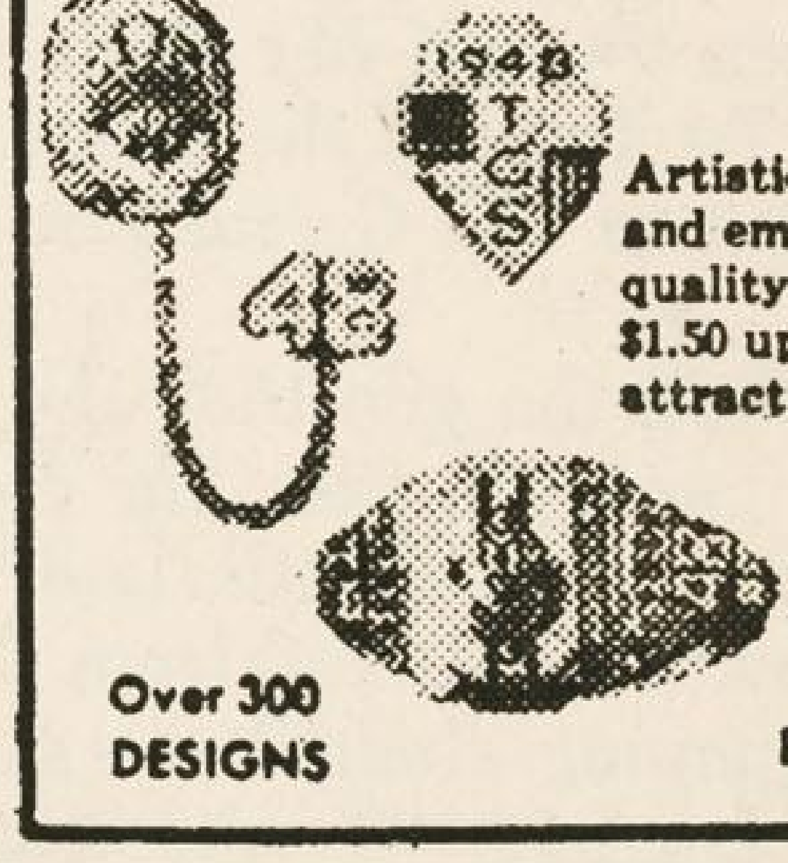

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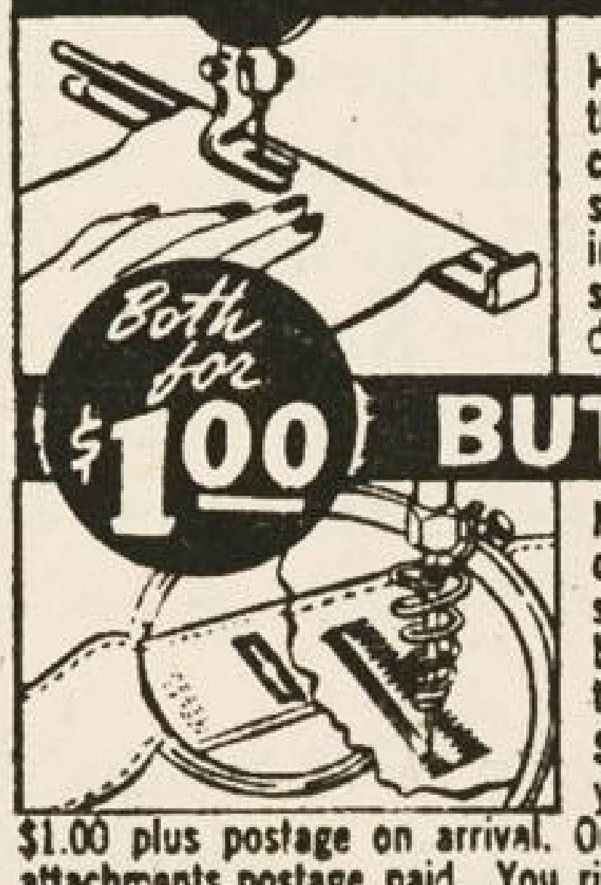

Hemstitch on any sewing machine with this handy attachment. Does two piece, criss-cross, inlaid, circular and hemstitching for pleats; also tucking, smocking and picoting. Makes rugs, comforters, slippers, etc. out of any material. Easy directions included.

BUTTON HOLER

Makes button holes on your sewing machine instead of by hand. Also darns stockings, sews buttons, zippers; and can be used for quilting. Sews in any direction — front, back or sideways.

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WITH A FELLOW LIKE TERRY ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN! AND MARY CERTAINLY FOUND MORE THAN SHE BARGAINED FOR IN THE . . .

MYSTERY OF THE ROSE!

By PEGGY BOYLE

MARY felt more than slightly uncomfortable. She twisted and turned, but the chilly feeling at the nape of her neck wouldn't go away.

The reason was obvious. Mary didn't like having a gun pointed at her! Not even in fun would she have liked it, and this wasn't fun. She gazed into the cold, black hole at the end of the barrel, and wondered how girls in the movies could be so nonchalant in this kind of situation. Mary didn't feel nonchalant at all.

"Go ahead," the man behind the gun growled. He flicked the barrel at the pen and paper on the table before Mary, then returned his aim to the general vicinity of her hair ribbon.

"I'm thinking," Mary said. "You want it to sound natural, don't you?" She congratulated herself because her voice quivered hardly at all, but when she reached for the pen, she found her hand was shaking.

The man scowled. "I'll give you just ten seconds to start writing." He had a singularly unpleasant scowl, the kind one associates with nightmares. Otherwise, he looked all right, in a slick sort of way. Dark skin, oily black hair, manicured nails, a well-tailored pin stripe. Definitely a smoothie.

Mary gnawed her lip in concentration, but at the end of the ten seconds her hand was moving across the paper. "To Terry," she wrote. "Deliver package at twelve noon to 123 Gerrard St. Extremely urgent. Rose Mary."

The man with the gun took the note, read it twice carefully. "I guess it'll pass," he decided.

Mary drew a deep breath, laid the pen down with an air of finality, and rose from the chair. "Now I'll have to be running along," she stated.

The man laughed. "You're a cool one," he said. "But I don't think you'll be running along for a while yet. We'll sit right here and wait for your boy friend." He turned to the door. "Hey, Horse!"

A small man with a long, sad face shuffled into the room. The dark man handed him the note. "Hire a kid to see that Terry Kenton gets this before noon," he instructed. "Where'll he be?" He turned to Mary.

"Probably at home, sleeping. It's only nine A.M., and it *is* Saturday." Mary sighed. "And *I* should be at the dentist's."

"You can make it next week, if you behave," the dark man replied. "Got it straight now, Horse?"

"Sure thing, Slinky." The sad-faced little man shuffled out.

"Slinky?" Mary couldn't help it. Even on the verge of hysteria, she giggled. "Is that your name?"

"That's what the boys call me." The man scowled warningly. "And I'm proud of it."

Mary controlled herself. "It kind of suits you," she agreed. She thought of the first time she'd run into him. It seemed like ages ago, but strangely enough it had only been yesterday after school. Yes, he'd certainly been slinky then.

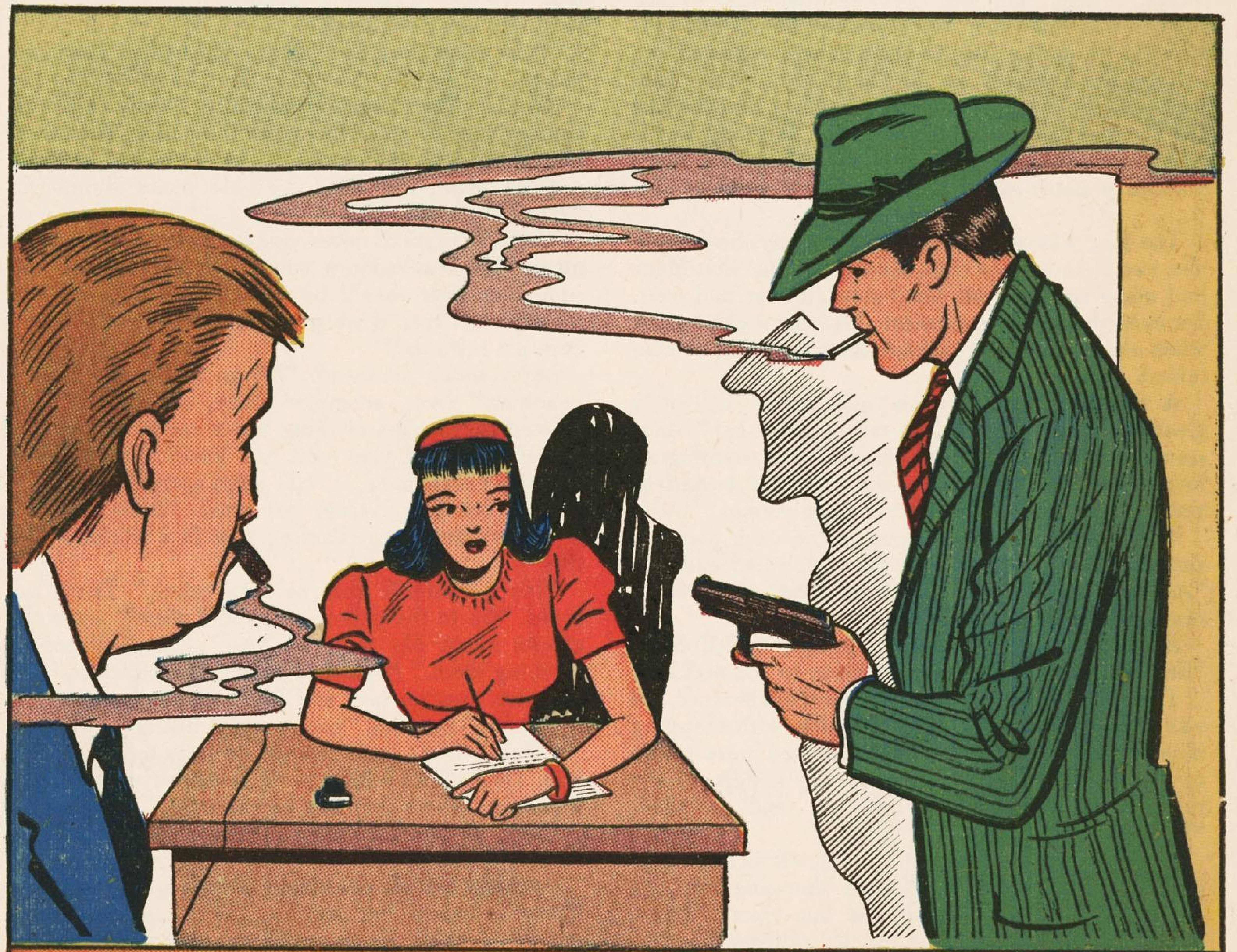
. . . Mary had dropped into the Downtown Department Store the afternoon before with a double purpose in mind. First, she'd gone to the kitchenware department to pick up some articles her mother wanted, then to the jewelry section for the important errand. Tomorrow was Terry Kenton's birthday, and Mary had decided after a frantic week of indecision that a friendship ring would be just the thing for a present. After all, Terry was a friend, a very good friend, and maybe, just maybe, he'd take the hint and give her his class pin in return. Anyway, she could dream . . .

But not for long. She was jolted out of her train of thought by a high-pitched scream. Then a tall dark man bumped into her, nearly sweeping her off her feet. Her shopping bag dropped to the floor, he caught it up and pressed it into her hand with a fierce, searching scowl—rather a gentlemanly act, she thought, for one in such a hurry, and he ran toward the stairs, all in one split second. Mary hadn't had time to catch her breath when a stout, matronly woman began to cry, "Stop, thief! Stop thief!" She looked around, but the dark man, whom she now knew as Slinky, had disappeared.

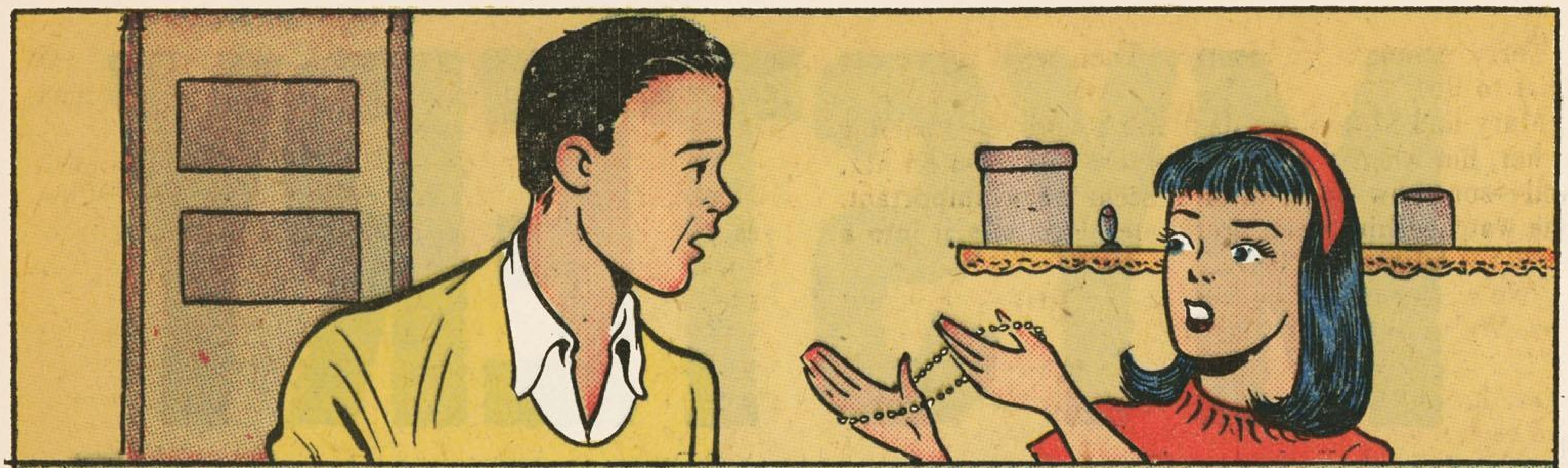
A crowd collected about the woman. She was sobbing excitedly. "My necklace—he grabbed it right out of my hand. I'd just had it wrapped—worth two thousand dollars!"

Policemen appeared, began to question the woman. A floorwalker dispersed the crowd, and Mary returned to the counter bearing friendship rings. It had been exciting, but now she had to decide on a ring and she'd have to concentrate. Nothing but the best for Terry—the best, that is, that could be bought for three dollars!

As she left the store a few moments later, Mary



"Go ahead," the man behind the gun growled. He flicked the barrel at the pen and paper on the table before Mary.



"Terry!" She jumped up, awe in her voice. "Terry, I'm right in the middle of a jewelry robbery!"

was blithely unaware that she was drawing some strange attention. A tall dark man stepped out of a doorway as she passed, signaled to a man across the street. This man, a short, shuffling creature with a long, sad face, nodded and proceeded to follow discreetly in Mary's trail . . .

The bridge club was meeting that day so her mother was out when Mary arrived home. She carried the shopping bag to the kitchen, removed the articles she'd picked up for her mother, piled them neatly on the kitchen table, then reached into the bag for the package containing the ring. It really was a beauty for the price, with an onyx setting, and Mary tried to imagine what Terry would say when he saw it.

The ring was at the bottom of the bag. Something else was there, too—a thin, oblong package that Mary had never seen before! She turned it over and over, her eyes wide with amazement. They grew even wider when she opened the package and saw what it contained.

A necklace, strung with milk-white, delicately gleaming pearls, lay on the table before her! Mary stared in fascination. She'd never seen anything so lovely, so exquisite, in her life. Minutes passed as she sat watching it, entranced, unbelieving.

There was a clatter of steps on the back porch, a rumble of knuckles on the door. A voice shouted, "Anybody home?" Mary jerked erect, then recognized the voice. It was Terry!

She tucked the ring into a pocket, yelled back, "Enter!," and returned her attention to the necklace.

Terry trotted in, full of chatter and exuberance. He was a tall, tanned boy, lithe and quick, with snapping blue eyes. "For a minute I thought you were asleep or . . ." He halted abruptly in the middle of the room, his eyes on the necklace, and whistled. "Where'd you get that?"

Dazed, Mary shook her head. "It was in my shopping bag," she muttered. "In my shopping bag . . . Terry!" She jumped up, awe in her voice. "Terry, I'm right in the middle of a jewelry robbery!"

It had all come clear in that second. The department store, the scream, the dark man crashing into her, picking up her shopping bag—*he* must have slipped the necklace into the bag! Slowly she sank back into her chair, stunned at the thought.

"Well, give, chick, give!" Terry waited impatiently. "What's the story?"

Mary described the incident at the store in short, breathless phrases. Terry listened, his lean, freckled face intent, a burning interest in his eyes. He had long been a bug about crimes and mysteries, and here was one happening practically in his own back yard. He was fascinated.

"Now what do I do?" Mary finished in bewilderment.

"Well," Terry spoke judicially, "there are two courses open to you. One, go to the police. The other, play along with the crooks."

"Play along with the . . .?" Mary was astonished. "Why?"

"Look!" Terry's eyes were alight with excitement. "The crooks know you've got the necklace, and sooner or later they'll be around to get it. We can set a perfect trap if we play it right. Why, we might even get rewards!"

Mary shook her head. "I'll go to the police. It's healthier." Dear, romantic Terry, she thought. He reacted to this sort of thing like a cat to catnip.

"Of course, if you want to," Terry shrugged. "If you don't trust me . . ." His voice sounded hurt.

"It's not that," Mary protested. "But—well, it's a citizen's duty to go to the police in a situation like this."

"It's a citizen's duty to stop crime," Terry lectured. "Go to the police, and you'll merely scare the crooks away. My way, we have a good chance of catching them." He turned a pair of eloquent, pleading blue eyes on her, and Mary couldn't resist.

"Terry," she said, "you're crazy. But keep talking."

"Well," Terry said, "sooner or later they'll contact you. Then all we'll have to do is maneuver them into a position where they can be captured."

"Why do you keep saying 'they'?" Mary inquired. "There's only one."

"Jewelry thieves practically always work in rings," Terry informed her sternly. "Why, there may be dozens of 'em!" He paused a moment to brood happily over the possibilities. "Now here's my plan. I'll take the necklace and keep it hidden. Just in case they try to force it from you, you know. You act as the bait, and when you hear from them, let me know."

"And then what?"

Terry grinned confidently. "Then we'll figure out what to do!"

Mary looked dubious. It didn't sound very sensible to her, but when Terry turned those blue eyes on her, well—somehow logic didn't seem very important. She watched him wrap up the necklace, slip it into a pocket, and turn to leave.

"Now remember," he instructed, "keep quiet about this. We've got to play it safe!"

. . . "Play it safe!" The phrase echoed in Mary's mind through the long, worried evening that followed, and each minute it sounded sillier. Her idea of playing it safe would be to call the police, to have ten or twenty of them posted about the house to protect her and the rest combing the city for the crooks. But Terry seemed to think that all a girl had to do was make like a tin duck in a shooting gallery, and everything would be fine.

Several times Mary was on the verge of calling the police in spite of Terry's plans. She lurked about the front windows, watching the street, and once thought she spotted a man with a long, sad face standing under a tree across the street. Her heart began to thump anxiously, but the next time she looked he was gone, and she felt better. Besides, Terry would probably never forgive her if she didn't follow through with his plans, and the idea of a life in which there would be an unforgiving Terry was too awful! No, she'd have to do as they'd agreed, at least till she could see him tomorrow and argue him out of the foolish plan.

It took a long time for sleep to arrive that night, and when it did, it was accompanied by fantastic dreams. She dreamed about last summer, and how Terry and she had amused themselves with a study of secret codes. At least, Terry had been amused though she'd been rather bored, deciphering his long involved notes. Of course, she hadn't minded too much; she'd do more than that to keep Terry interested in her. But now, in her dreams, those absurd codes took on nightmare significance, with Mary racking her brains to remember their systems, upon which her life seemed to depend. She was glad to wake up and see the clear, honest morning sun streaming through her window.

Then she saw something else. Her room had been ransacked while she slept! The doors of the closet were open, its contents strewn about the floor. Purses, hatboxes, overnight bag—all had been rummaged during the night. She remembered the sad-faced man under the tree, and shivered. That did it! As soon as she saw Terry, she was calling the deal off and going to the police!

She looked at the clock. It was eight-fifteen, and she had a dental appointment at nine. The necklace business would have to wait till that was taken care of. Oh, well, Terry was probably still snoozing anyway, sleepyhead that he was.

Mary rushed through breakfast, grabbed her coat and purse, and hurried off in the direction of Dr. Jones' office. It was a lovely morning, clear and bright, and all the vague terrors and fancies of the night dropped from her mind. It didn't seem possible anything criminal could exist on such a beautiful day.

She walked briskly for two blocks. At the next corner a car pulled up, and as Mary passed, a man leaned out and called to her.

"Know where Sycamore Street is?" he demanded.

Unthinkingly, Mary approached the car. "Why, yes, it's . . ." She stopped, staring at the man's face. It was long and sad. Then she saw the gun in his hand, and swallowed hard.

"Get in!" he ordered, opening the rear door. There was nothing to do but obey. Mary found herself in the back of a sedan, seated next to the tall dark man who had bumped into her at the store.

"Okay, Horse," he said, "drive over to Gerrard Street." He turned to Mary and smiled. "We have a little business with you. I hope you don't mind."

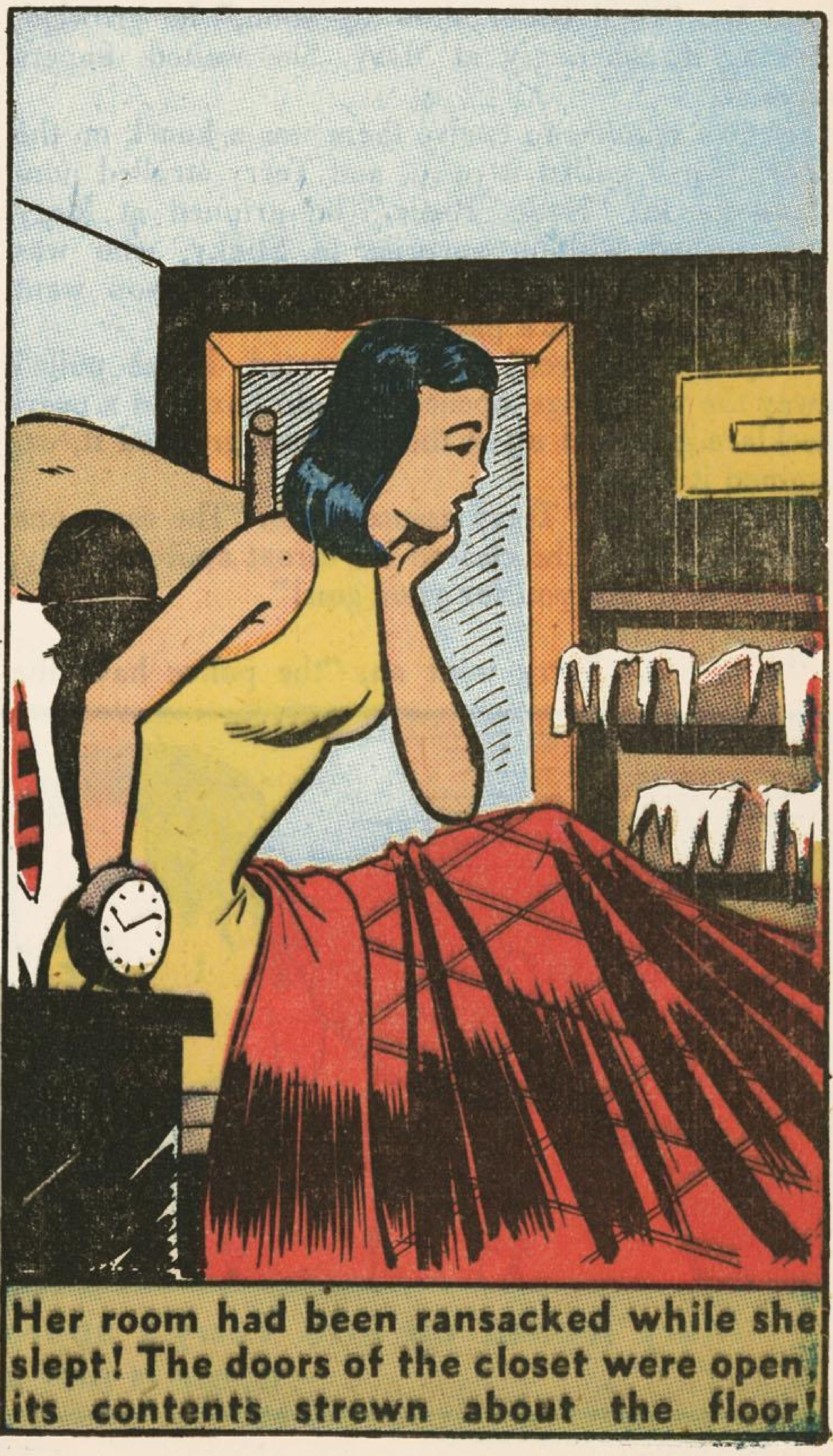
"As a matter of fact, I do," Mary said frankly.

"Too bad!" He leaned back, not speaking again until they arrived at a grimy little apartment on Gerrard Street. There Mary was seated in a chair against the wall.

"Now," the man called Slinky drawled, "you'll tell us where the necklace is." Leisurely, he took a gun from his coat.

"Suppose I don't?"

Slinky scowled impatiently and snapped back the hammer of the gun. it made a menacing sound. "You will," he said simply.



Her room had been ransacked while she slept! The doors of the closet were open, its contents strewn about the floor!

A shiver danced along Mary's spine, and she shrugged helplessly. Why hadn't Terry thought of this happening? "Maneuver them into a position where they can be captured," he'd said. Well, they'd maneuvered her—or had they? . . . A fragmentary idea began to develop in Mary's mind, behind the bright gleam of fear in her eyes.

The gun jiggled restlessly in Slinky's hand, and Mary began to speak. Her words were slow, her mind ticking rapidly. "I don't know where the necklace is," she said. "A friend of mine is keeping it." Slinky's finger roamed toward the trigger. "But I can have him bring it here."

Slinky considered. Then he gestured toward the pen and paper on the table. "Write him a note," he ordered. "But no tricks! Be sure it sounds natural."

Mary hesitated, thinking hard; then slowly she composed the note. Slinky studied it carefully, finally handing it to Horse for delivery after Mary had furnished Terry's address. Mary sank back into the chair, trying to conceal her taut nerves. All she could do was wait—and hope.

. . . An hour passed, and Horse returned. "It's O.K.," he reported. "I hired a kid to deliver the note, and watched him till he did."

Slinky prowled back and forth across the floor, one eye on the alarm clock on the mantel. A half hour went by. "He'd better show up soon," he growled, looking threateningly at Mary. She waited, fingers crossed.

At five minutes to twelve there was a knock on the door. Horse pulled it open, and Terry strolled nonchalantly in. "Hello, Rosie," he grinned at Mary then turned without surprise to Slinky, who was covering him with the gun. "I presume you want this?" He held out a package.

"Open it, Horse," Slinky directed. Horse pulled away the wrappings, opened the thin box, and a pearl necklace glistened up at them. Slinky grabbed it, examined it closely.

"It's genuine," Terry assured him. "The same one you stole. Now," he cleared his throat apologetically, "I'll have to ask you for your gun!"

Slinky stared.

"You see." Terry went on, "the police have the building surrounded. You'd better surrender to me if you don't want to get hurt."

Slinky's voice was incredulous. "You're kidding!" He dashed to the door and plunged out—into the arms of two blue-coated men in the hall. More policemen swarmed in, snapped handcuffs on Horse, and congratulated Mary.

Escorted back into the apartment, Slinky sank into a chair, stunned. "But how . . .?" He looked at Terry, his eyes puzzled.

Terry laughed and held out the note. "It was in code," he explained. "Something I taught Mary last summer. I knew as soon as I saw the signature. 'Rose Mary.' There had to be some reason for her to add 'Rose' to her name, and there was. The tip-off was in the first line, 'To Terry.' Why didn't she write 'Terry' or 'Dear Terry?' She was giving me a number—the number 'two.' From that point, it was simple."

Slinky blinked sadly. "And I fell for a trick like that!"

"The code was elementary," Terry continued. "In our Number Two Code, we just consider the first letter of every other word. Look!" He capitalized several letters in the message, held the note before Slinky's eyes. It read, "*D*eliver package *A*t twelve *N*oon to 123 *G*errard St. *E*xtremely urgent. *R*ose Mary."

"D-A-N-G-E-R!" Slinky slowly spelled out. "Well, I'll be a jailbird!"

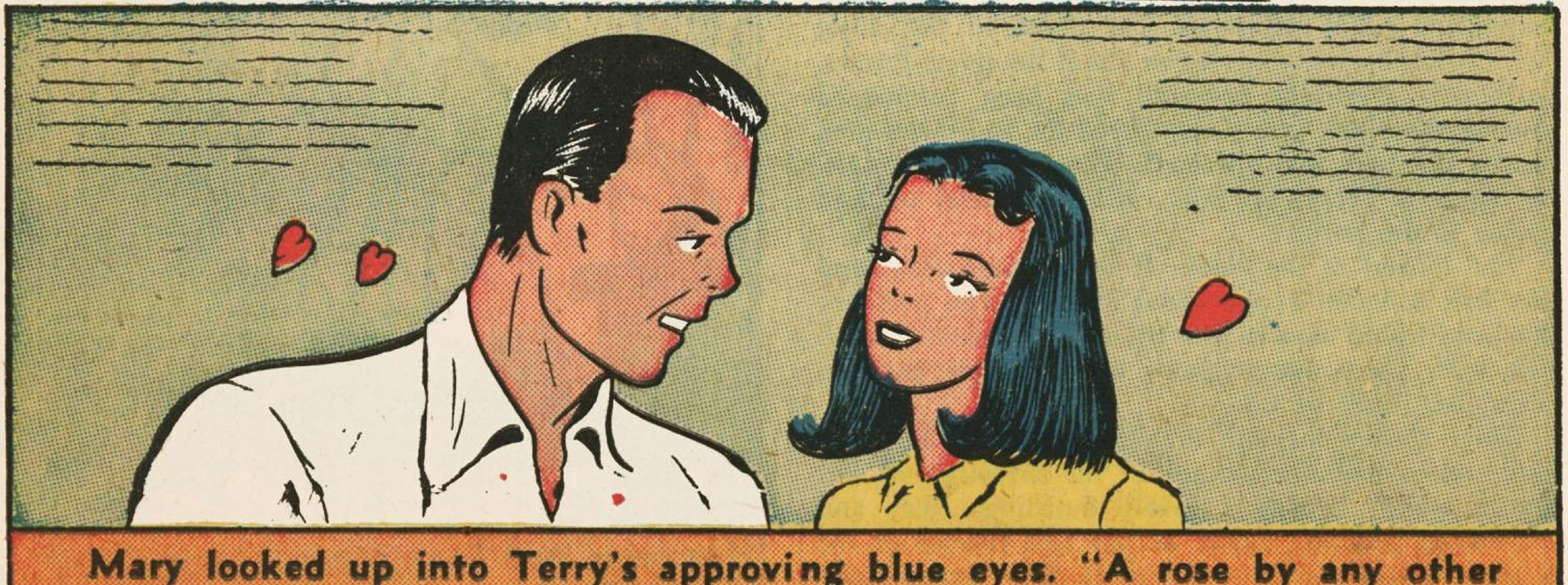
"True," Terry conceded, then resumed, "From that I knew it was a trap so I brought the police with me. Now you're caught with the necklace in your possession, Mary is rescued, and everything's swell." He turned to Mary. "Come on, Rosie, let's go hunt up another crime."

Mary shook her head weakly. "Never again! And don't call me Rosie!" Not that she really cared, of course. After all . . .

Terry put her thought into words. "A rose by any other name is just as sweet!"

"Uh-huh." As she looked up into his approving blue eyes, Mary wondered what he'd call her when he saw that friendship ring. That evening she found out—and it was the sweetest name yet!

THE END



Mary looked up into Terry's approving blue eyes. "A rose by any other name is just as sweet!" he said.

FOOD FOR FUN

EGGS FOR EXCELLENCE . . .

Tired of fried, boiled, poached or scrambled eggs? Then you'll welcome a change to shirred eggs, cooked in their own little shirred-egg dish, which holds two eggs and accompaniments. Consider, for example, shirred eggs done with bacon and cheese.

Put two slices of broiled bacon in the bottom of the porcelain shirred-egg dish. On top of the bacon arrange thin slices of Swiss cheese. Drop the eggs onto the cheese, being careful not to break the yolks; it's best to slide them from a cup. Bake in a moderately hot oven for just two or three minutes, until the egg whites are set. Dust with salt and pepper.

SPICY SAUCE . . .

Tasty and simple is the rule for today so here's a special nutmeg sauce to use on apple dumplings or fruit or berry puddings which have been made with biscuit dough.

Mix together a cup of sugar, a tablespoon of flour and ¼ of a teaspoon of salt. Add two cups of boiling water gradually, stirring all the time. Then add a tablespoon of butter, and cook for five minutes. Remove the sauce from the fire, and stir in one full teaspoon of grated nutmeg, freshly grated, if possible. Serve hot.

SANDWICH SURPRISE . . .

When you want to serve a savory hot sandwich for a Saturday lunch, try this.

First, mix and force through the meat grinder a half cup of cooked shrimp, a half cup of cooked chicken livers, a seeded red pepper, one Bermuda onion, and a half cup of celery. Season well with salt, pepper, lemon juice and a whiff of curry powder. Add mayonnaise to this mixture, and spread it between slices of white bread. Butter the outside of the sandwich and toast in a sandwich grill or frying pan.

Serve this exciting sandwich piping hot—then make your guests guess its ingredients!

SCANDINAVIAN SALAD . . .

For a salad with plenty of zip to it, try this one of Scandinavian origin.

Wash celery, and chop enough to make 1½ cups. Cook it in salted water until it's softened just a little bit. Drain and chill.

Peel and core two large apples—the very tart ones are best—and cut them into small cubes. Sprinkle lemon juice on them to keep them white.

Work the yolk of a hard-boiled egg smooth with one tablespoon of olive oil. Blend in one tablespoon of cream and ¾ of a tablespoon of vinegar. Season with salt, pepper, and about one teaspoonful of sugar. Beat well, and then pour over the apple and celery. Serve on lettuce leaves, and garnish with the chopped egg white.

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PATSY WALKER
BE CAREFUL, BUZZ!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT A THING, PATSY! I'VE GOT THIS TRICK DOWN PAT!
"IT'S NO JOKE!"
5076
MEANWHILE...
WHERE WE GOIN' NOW, HONEYCHILE?
IN HERE, HOTSHOT! I WANT YOU TO MEET THE GANG!
DRUGS AND SODA
1
HOLD IT, HEDY! GOT AN IDEA FOR SOME LAUGHS!
?

ONE...TWO...
THREE...OWW!!
ZING!
PING!
WORKS EVERY TIME, EH?
B...B...BUT, PATSY!
IF THIS IS THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO WORK, I DON'T THINK IT'S MUCH OF A TRICK!
YAK! YAK!
WE THINK IT WAS TERRIBLE!
BUZZ, I WANT YOU TO MEET MY FRIEND, HOTSHOT HOOLIGAN!
GLAD TO KNOW YOU, HOTSHOT!

AND I'M GLAD TO KNOW YOU...
BUZZ!
YAK! YAK! YAK!
ISN'T HE A RIOT?
STOMP!
STOMP!
HE SLAYS ME... AND I'D LIKE TO RETURN THE FAVOR SOMEDAY!
HOTSHOT WILL BE AT THE PARTY TONIGHT! WE'LL REALLY HAVE FUN NOW!
YOU BET! I'LL LIVEN THINGS UP!
WELL, 'BYE NOW! SEE YOU AT THE PARTY!
CAN YOU PICTURE THAT DEADHEAD LIVENING UP ANYTHING WITH HIS CORNY GAGS!
YOU SHOULDN'T KNOCK CORNY GAGS!
3

OH GOLLY! I FORGOT! LET ME GET YOU A TOWEL!
NEVER MIND, WE'RE LEAVING! AND YOU'D BETTER NOT TRY THAT TABLECLOTH ACT AT THE PARTY!
MEANWHILE...
HOTSHOT, I WANT YOU TO DO A BIG FAVOR FOR ME!
ANYTHING YOU SAY, LUSCIOUS!
I WANT YOU TO FIX IT SO PATSY LEAVES THE PARTY EARLY--WITHOUT BUZZ!
HMM!!
I'VE GOT IT! I'LL PULL SOME GAGS ON BUZZ THAT'LL EMBARRASS PATSY! SHE'LL LEAVE HIM FLAT AND IT'LL LEAVE US HAVE SOME LAUGHS, TOO!
SOUNDS FINE!
AT THE PARTY...
THERE THEY ARE! GO TO WORK!
RIGHT! ONLY THE CONTENTS OF THIS LITTLE CAN WILL DO ALL THE WORK!
4

HI, KEEDS! SURE NICE SEEING YOU TWO AGAIN!
I WISH I COULD SAY THE SAME!
SMACK!
SAY! THE MUSIC'S STARTED! DON'T LET ME KEEP YOU FROM DANCING!
THAT CREEP GIVES ME A PAIN IN THE NECK!
URK!
?
HA! HA! HA!
SCRATCH! SCRATCH! SCRATCH!
LATER...
HELLO, PATSY...
DON'T EVER SPEAK TO ME, YOU...YOU CLOWN! I'VE NEVER BEEN MORE EMBARRASSED!
5

HONEST, PATSY, IT WASN'T MY FAULT! SOMEONE PUT ITCHING POWDER DOWN MY BACK!
HMMPH! A LIKELY STORY!
LOOK, HONEY, I'LL GET YOU SOME DELICIOUS PUNCH AND YOU WON'T FEEL SO MAD!
WELL... ALL RIGHT!
EEK!
HEY!
I DON'T WANT YOU TO ***KILL*** BUZZ BEFORE I GET HIM!
IF PATSY DOESN'T GIVE HIM THE BOUNCE THIS TIME-- I'LL EAT MY COAT, BUTTONS AND ALL!
6

I KNOW! I KNOW! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! BUZZ BAXTER, IF YOU EMBARRASS ME ONCE MORE TONIGHT, I'LL GO HOME!
THEY'RE STILL TOGETHER! SHALL I GET SOME SALT TO GO WITH THAT COAT YOU'RE GOING TO EAT?
CUT THE COMEDY! I'M MAD NOW, AND I'M REALLY GOING TO GO TO WORK THIS TIME!
IF THIS DOESN'T DO IT--NOTHING WILL!
?
SQUIRT!!
SAY, BUZZ! LET ME SHAKE YOUR HAND! THAT WAS A TERRIFIC JITTERBUG DANCE YOU DID!
OH, IT WAS NOTHING! I'VE BEEN *ITCHING* TO DO THAT FOR YEARS!
HA! HA! ? HA! ? HO! HA!
HA!
WHAT LOVELY FINGERPRINTS!
HA! HA!
BUZZ SURE IS A *HANDY* GUY TO HAVE AROUND!
HA! HA! HA!
17

EEK!
YIPE!
BUZZ BAXTER! I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN! GOOD NIGHT, YOU-- YOU COMEDIAN!
BUT, PATSY--
HA! HA! HA!
PATSY! PLEASE WAIT A MOMENT! I WANT TO PROVE SOMETHING TO YOU!
OH, HEDY!
I'M IN HERE, HOTSHOT!
HEDY, I'VE DECIDED THAT YOU'RE MUCH BETTER OFF WITHOUT THAT BUZZ CHARACTER! THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE GUY!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?
8
NO SENSAYUMA!
THE END

LEADING Lady

DID YOU EVER HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THE TWO THINGS YOU LOVE MOST? THAT'S WHAT JANIE HAD TO DO—AND SHE HAD TO DECIDE IMMEDIATELY!

By MARJORIE ABBOTT

ONCE again Trent had given a terrible performance. Basketball practice was over, and I came down from my seat in the bleachers and gave the ball a vicious kick as it lay on the gym floor.

Trent saw me, and he grinned at me the way I grin at three-year-old Nancy next door.

"Tsk, tsk, Janie! Mustn't kick! Save that for your cheer-leading." He minced across the floor on tiptoe with one wrist raised and bent daintily. "*This* is the way a would-be actress should appear to her adoring public!'

I wanted to stamp my feet and shout at him, but instead I lifted my chin and said, in what I hoped was a casual voice, "Well, I must admit you know more about would-be actresses lately than you seem to know about basketball."

That was my exit line, and I could practically hear him coming to a slow boil behind me.

I had needled him successfully, and I should have been happy in an abnormal sort of way, but I wasn't. I had to blink hard to keep back my tears, and the only thing I could think of was how things used to be between Trent and me. We were like *that* till Billie Carver came along. Trent and I had gone all through grade school together, starting at scratch from kindergarten. And then came high school, with dates and parties, and suddenly a new awareness of each other that made me understand for the first time just what all those old chestnuts meant, *lovelight in your eyes, heaven in your smile,* and so forth.

Then Billie Carver arrived on the scene. She was the new girl in town. I'd always been told I was cute, in spite of a turned-up freckled nose, but my blue eyes and wavy brown hair seemed pretty insignificant beside Billie's black eyes and hair and her bright red mouth.

Well, from the time she showed up at Graham High things went from bad to worse, between Trent and me.

I walked toward the gym door, the one leading out to the corridor, and who was standing there but the subject of my thoughts, Billie Carver herself? She was wearing a new beaver coat and a coral wool dress that I'm sure was made of imported Shetland yarn. Her hair was cut in the new short style, and on her it looked good. She was leaning against the wall, and her hands were thrust lazily into her pockets.

She didn't have to tell me she was waiting for Trent Westfall.

"Hi, Janie," she said. Her voice matched the rest of her personality. There was plenty of low-pitched oomph in it. "What's your face out of joint about?"

I looked at her with my eyes wide open and innocent, and said blankly, "It's no more out of joint than usual, is it? And by the way, I hope you've been giving a little thought to that new cheer of ours—the hoop-de-loop one. At the last game you definitely weren't giving it all you had, and we didn't show up so hot."

"Listen to the gal," said Billie lazily. "Can't you ever forget duty and the old school spirit long enough to be human? Why don't you skip a game sometime and forget about studying for Dramatic Club and go out and have yourself a time?"

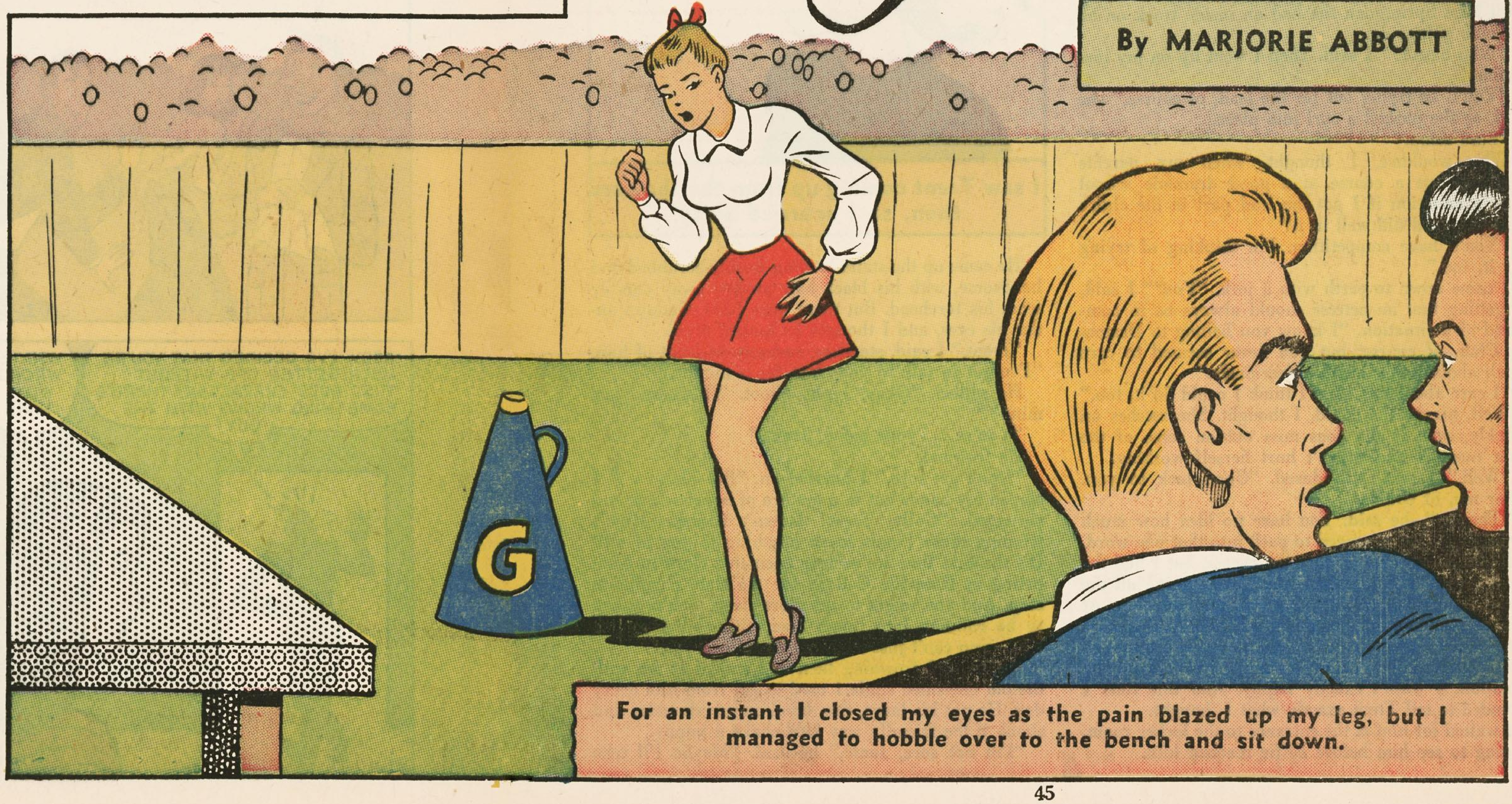
Dramatic Club was strictly apart from school. Miss Springman was a former actress, and she coached several of us kids in town who seemed to have talent. Billie and I both belonged, Billie because she thought acting would be a new thrill, and I because I'd wanted to be an actress ever since I'd seen my first movie over ten years ago.

"Look at me," Billie continued. "I take the easy way, and it's paid dividends so far, hasn't it?"

She meant Trent, of course. I could feel that blow way below the belt. I took a deep breath and said, "There's more than one way of doing things."

I saw Trent coming up from the showers then, so I scurried away. I was always afraid the way I felt about Trent would show in my eyes, and in front of Billie . . . Well, a girl has her pride. I looked back over my shoulder long enough to see he was as devastating as ever, grinning eyes, curly hair, and broad shoulders, too, of course.

It wasn't entirely jealousy that made me feel as I did toward Billie. It was knowing that Billie was all wrong for Trent. Not wrong socially, but wrong for his morale. Trent was the best basketball star Graham High had ever had, and this year for the first time we had hopes of getting to the State Finals. But now things weren't looking so good. Billie



For an instant I closed my eyes as the pain blazed up my leg, but I managed to hobble over to the bench and sit down.

thought strict training for basketball was too, too silly, and she was quite hilarious because the players weren't supposed to eat gooey sundaes and had to be in bed by nine.

And what guy could resist her when she looked up at him sideways the way she did, with her full red lips slightly smiling and her black eyes shining right into his? Trent couldn't. When she said, "Let's go to a dance tonight; Daddy said we could have the car," he went.

Well, anyway, Trent wasn't making baskets the way he used to. I always led the cheering section till my arms and legs and voice were practically useless for days afterward. But, frankly, I wasn't sure it helped much.

The game with Hazelton was the last one before the Finals. Billie and I were in the locker room putting on our short red satin skirts and the long-sleeved white blouses we wore with them. Billie stood in front of the mirror and puckered up for another layer of lipstick and then perched her red beanie way on the back of her head.

I was waving my arms around in what I hoped looked like ballet figures and saying rhythmically, "Hoop-de-loop, fly the coop . . ." when Billie interrupted.

"I suppose you've heard about the Dramatic Club putting on *Daffodil Hill* in a couple of months?"

Billie thought because her family was friendly with Miss Springman she had an inside track on all the club goings on.

"Who hasn't?" I said. Then I went up on my toes again.

"You'll be trying out for the lead, of course," she said, as she pushed a curl into place.

"Sure thing."

Who wouldn't, I thought, when my parents promised me a course at a good dramatic school after graduation if I got the lead part in the club's next play and did well in it?

"You'll have competition. I'm thinking of trying for it, too."

I came down to earth with a jerk. "*You!*" I said, forgetting that an actress should always be in command of a situation. "I know you belong to Dramatic Club, of course, but you never seemed to care much about doing anything seriously."

"I care about this. And I think I could do it, too."

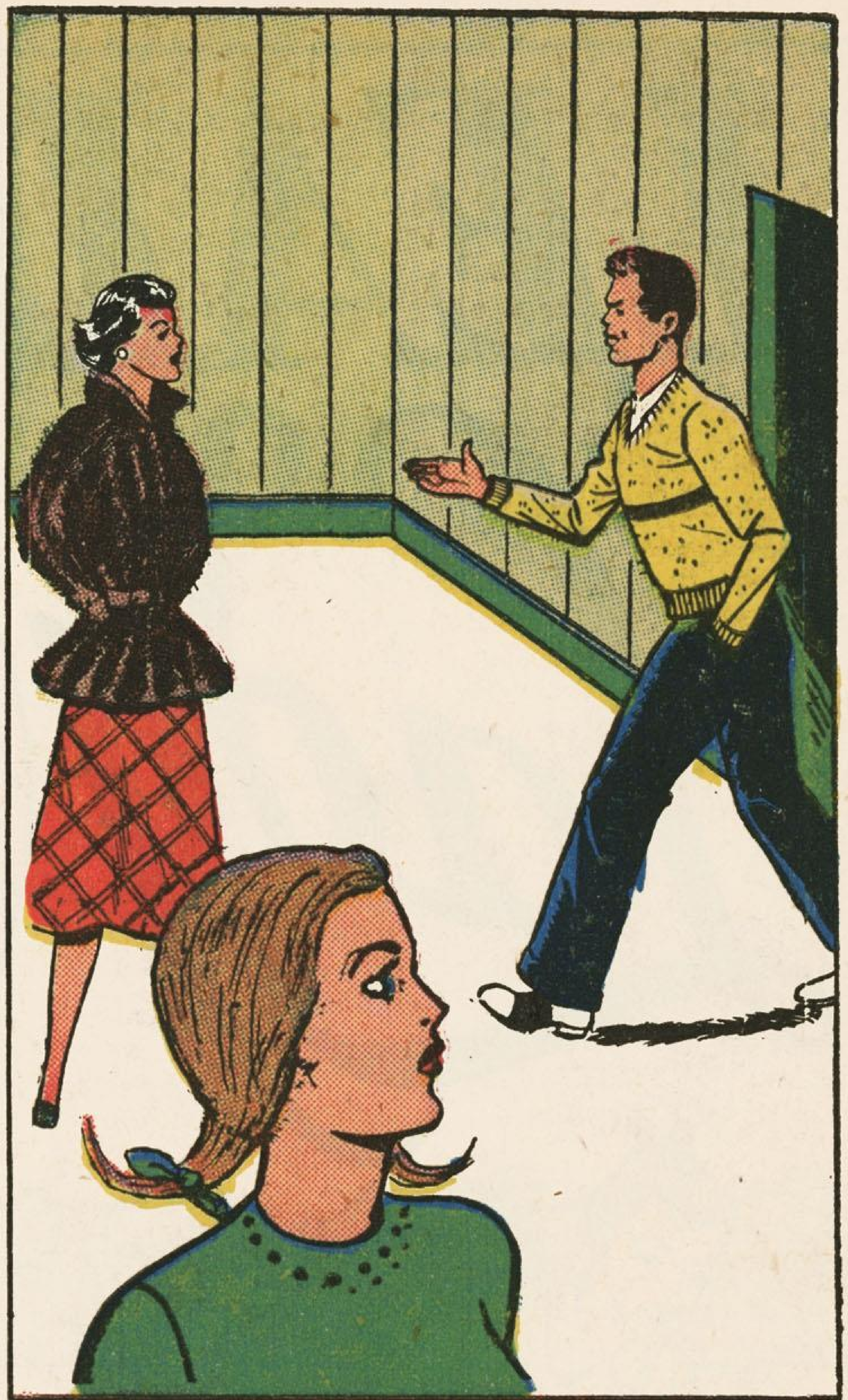
Well, maybe she could, I thought. She catches on quickly, even if she does miss out on some of the finer nuances and doesn't hurt herself working.

"Well," I said, still dazed. "Good luck to you. After me, of course."

"Thanks," she said. You have no idea how much dry sarcasm she managed to pack into that one word.

Billie looked cute leading the cheers, but I had the same feeling I always had, that I was doing all the work. Trent was still off his game, and somehow or other I couldn't think about much of anything else. We squeezed by and won by one point, and although I was screaming as crazily as anyone else about the situation, I wasn't exactly happy. And this time I intended to tell Trent exactly what I thought.

I waited for him at the entrance to the locker room, hoping to see him before Billie reached him.



I saw Trent coming up from the showers then, so I scurried away.

He came up the stairs looking freshly scrubbed and handsome, with his black hair pushed away damply from his forehead. But there were faint shadows under his eyes, and I thought he looked tired.

"Trent," I said, standing squarely in front of him, "I've got to talk to you. Just for a minute."

He smiled. "Okay, Janie. Shoot. What's on your mind?"

"You're off your game, Trent."

He frowned.

"Don't get sore," I hurried on. "But—but . . ." I spread my hands out in a gesture of hopelessness and shrugged. "Golly, Trent! Doesn't Graham High's winning those Finals mean anything to you at all? It's the first time we've ever been this close to competing at Roseville College for the state championship. And you've got to get more sleep. You're going to be running into tough competition—but *tough!* You—you can't just let us all down, can you?"

He stopped frowning then and smiled at me with the old one-sided smile I used to get from him every day. He put his large, thin hand on my shoulder and shook it the friendly way he'd shake a puppy.

"I'm not sore, Janie," he said. "Maybe I'll take your advice this time. But don't hand out too much of that free stuff!"

I made a circle with my thumb and forefinger and held it in front of him.

"Thanks, Trent," I said.

"That's okay," he replied. "You don't spare the punches on those cheers, Janie. Nothing wrong with your school spirit."

I bowed from the waist, and then walked out the door. Billie was there, seething, but it didn't show except in the hot light way back in her eyes.

. . . The tryouts for the lead in *Daffodil Hill* were held two weeks before the State Final basketball games. After all the weeding out was done, Billie and I were the only two left to play the part of Vicky.

Billie was looking at me with contempt in her eyes and a small smile on her mouth, and I gulped hard. She was good, much better than I'd expected.

"You two girls both do well," said Miss Springman. "I'm not going to decide today, as we have quite a bit of time before we give the play. But *Daffodil Hill* will be playing in the city very soon for one night only. I don't know the exact date, but it will be in the newspaper. Why don't you both try to go in to see the play, and study the way a professional handles the part? It would help you a lot. Then I'll try again to decide between you."

Well, maybe you think I didn't plan to see that play! The paper said only that it was coming and didn't set the exact date. My parents agreed to take me, and they gave in very gracefully, I thought, but after all they both knew I'd always wanted to be an actress.

. . . It was the next day or so that I got the bad news. I'd been all in a dither, what with practicing on cheers and thinking about *Daffodil Hill*. Anyway, Billie saw the paper before I did, and she loved telling me about it. She was waiting for me at the door to my English class when I came out.

"Going to the play in the city?" she asked.

"You bet!" I replied. "I wouldn't miss it for . . ."

"Oh," she said, and she let that penetrate for a second before she followed up with, "What about the Finals?"

"Well, what about them?"

"Didn't you see the paper? The play and tne game are on the same night."

Now that was tough to take. For an instant I wasn't aware of much of anything except the heavy beating of my heart and the weak feeling in my legs. Maybe that sounds silly, but if you've ever wanted to be an actress more than anything and if you've ever loved your school next to your mother and dad, you'll know what I mean.

And then, just like that, I knew what I wanted to do. I wanted to forget about my school spirit and Graham High and take this wonderful chance to be the lead in a play. But at the same time I knew I couldn't. Because it all boiled down to this. Who wanted to forget about the school? Me. Just me. But who wanted Graham High to take the cup at the Finals for the state championship? Everybody in school, and I wouldn't be wrong if I said practically everyone in town wanted that championship.

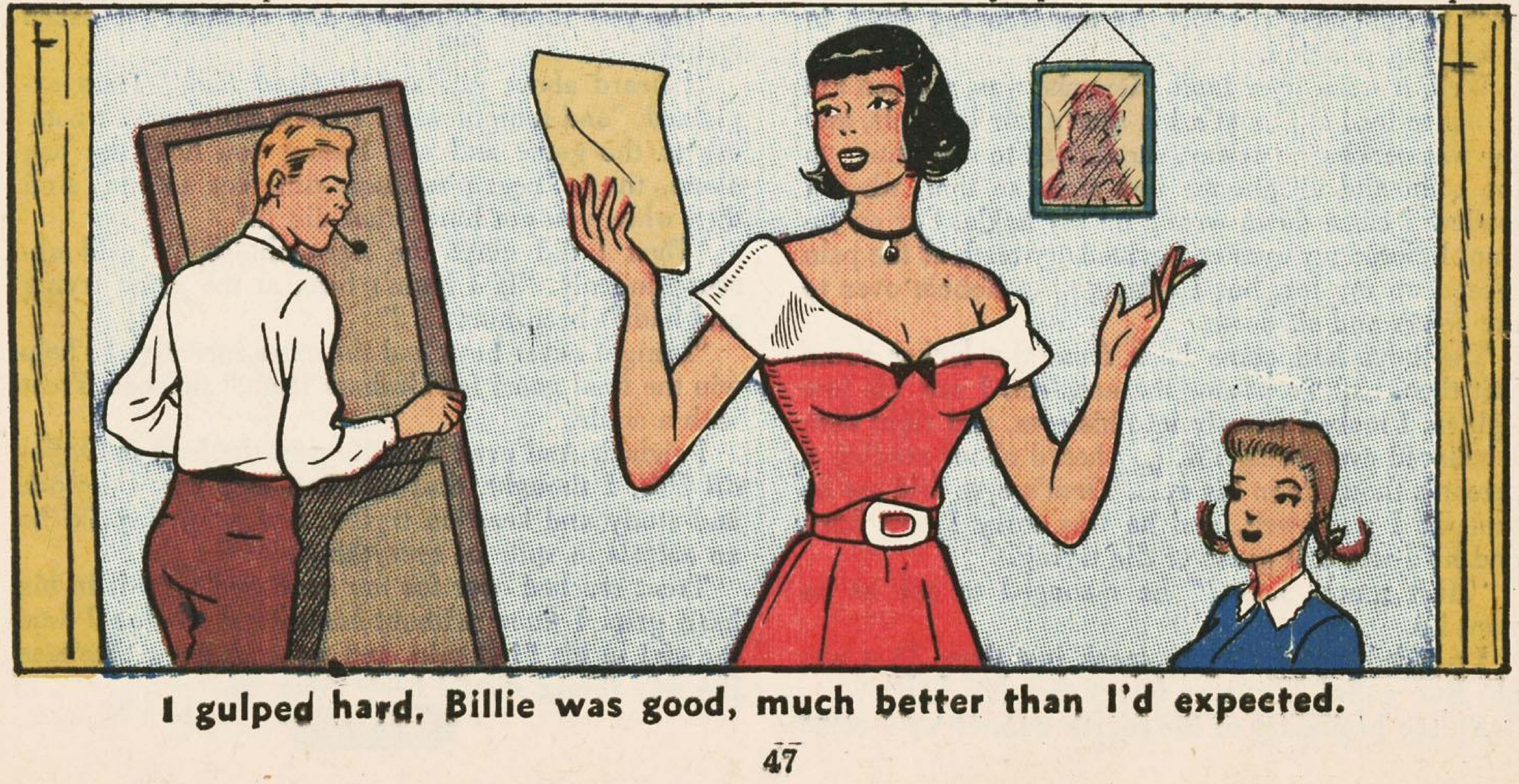
"Still going to the play?" Billie asked slyly.

I came to, then, and I turned around and looked her squarely in the eye.

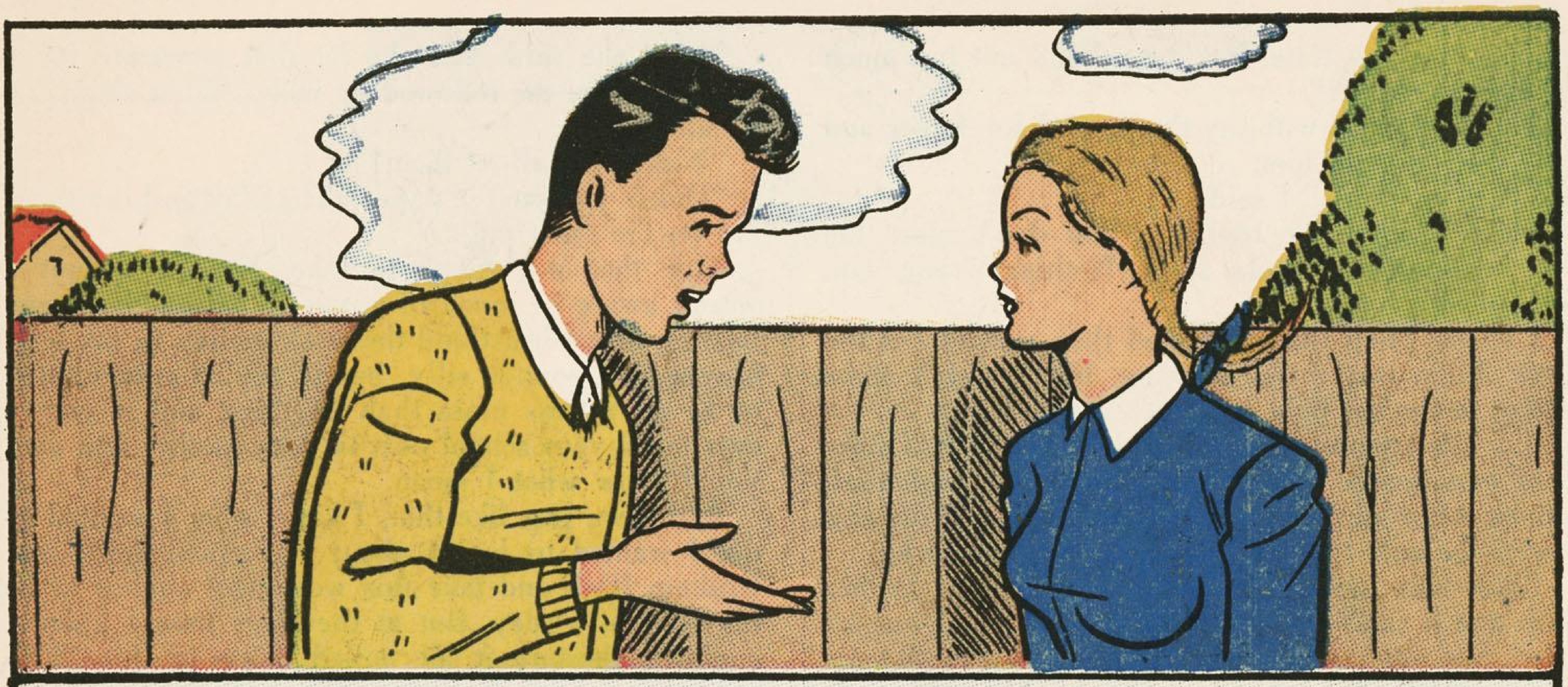
"No, Billie," I said slowly, "I'm not going. But you are! You're going to do what you want to do, regardless of who gets hurt. You're going to let me carry the load alone at the Finals. Well, don't think I can't do it."

I left the field in triumph, as they used to say in books, but you can bet I wasn't happy. Miss Springman had always been fair, and I knew if Billie saw the play and improved, and I didn't, she'd stick to her word and give Billie the part, as we'd been pretty evenly matched in the way we'd done it at the tryouts.

. . . The night of the Finals finally arrived. As I stood on the gleaming basketball floor in the large college field house and looked up, up, up at the thousands of people, I felt all sort of choked up with



I gulped hard, Billie was good, much better than I'd expected.



"You've heard about people being fools and then suddenly seeing the light, haven't you?" Trent asked me on the way home.

pride to think my school, our team, was part of the show they'd come to see.

Billie wasn't there, of course, and I had angry thoughts of her soaking up technique at *Daffodil Hill*, but there were two freshmen to help out with the cheer leading. They were strictly second-class help, though, so I had to give with even more than I had before.

We got off to a bad start in the first quarter. The other team, Van Buren, had a forward who looked almost as good as Trent at his best, and every time the voice boomed over the loud-speaker, "Basket by Stacy," cold chills raced down my back and I couldn't wait to be on my feet again, leading the yells. All too seldom that strangely echoing voice said, "Basket by Westfall."

We were still behind at the half, but bad. 28 to 18. It was then I decided to try out the new hoop-de-loop yell. It called for me to make a handspring over the back of another girl while she was stooping down in a leapfrog position.

Well, it wasn't her fault. Here she was, a green kid trying to lead cheers at a big-time affair like this, and she was nervous. Anyway, she started to straighten up too soon and caught me just right so that, when I landed, I came down wrong on my ankle. For an instant I closed my eyes and gritted my teeth as the pain blazed up my leg, but I managed to hobble over to the bench and sit down.

The boys had come back from the locker room just then, and Trent saw the accident. I saw his jaw tighten. I looked directly into his eyes, and right then I believed everything I'd ever heard about reading a person's thoughts in his eyes. Trent's eyes told me he thought I was swell, and he was sorry I was hurt, and he'd win this game or die trying.

"Hurt much, Janie?" he managed to ask as he went by.

I nodded, not daring to speak just then. That was all. But, golly! I'll never forget that last half!

By the beginning of the fourth quarter we'd come up to within four points of the opposing team, and then that old loud-speaker boomed over and over again, "Basket by Westfall!" Talk about music to my ears!

The freshmen had to carry on with the cheers alone, but I stayed there and watched in spite of my swelling ankle, which I tried to keep hidden so no one would say, "Downstairs with you, kid."

Well, we won! It was an unforgettable night for Graham High, one to tell our grandchildren about. I was proud I'd had a small part in the happenings there that night.

After the game Trent was waiting for me, and he told me he was the boy who was going to take me home—and nobody else. I gave in without a murmur.

"You've heard about people being fools and then suddenly seeing the light, haven't you, Janie?" he asked on the way home. He sounded almost shy.

"Do you mean Billie, by any chance?" I asked frankly.

"I heard about you and *Daffodil Hill*," Trent explained, "and tonight when I knew Billie wasn't coming to the game and was letting you hold the bag alone, things began to look different to me. And then when you got hurt—that did it."

"Then I did make the right choice," I said absent-mindedly. "If I hadn't been at the game trying and hadn't been hurt . . ."

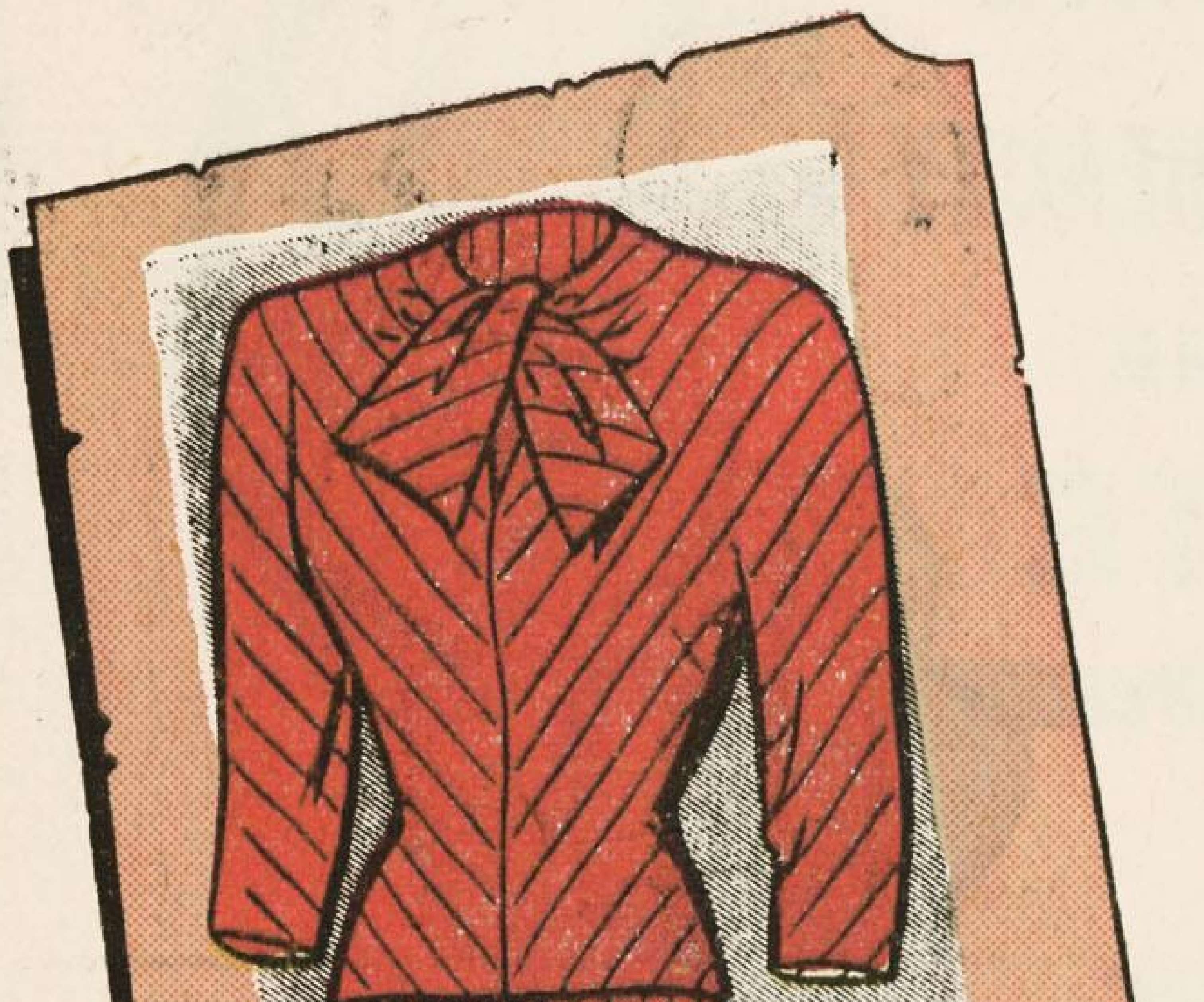
"I might never have had the extra incentive to help win the final game for Graham High," finished Trent with a smile.

I sighed. And even if Billie won the lead in *Daffodil Hill*, I thought, that wouldn't stop me. I'd work and study and keep on trying, and some day I'd be an actress in spite of everything.

Trent reached over for my hand and held it in his hard grip. I knew without his saying so that I was the girl in his life again, and we both knew that was the way things should be between us.

THE END

STITCHIN' TIME



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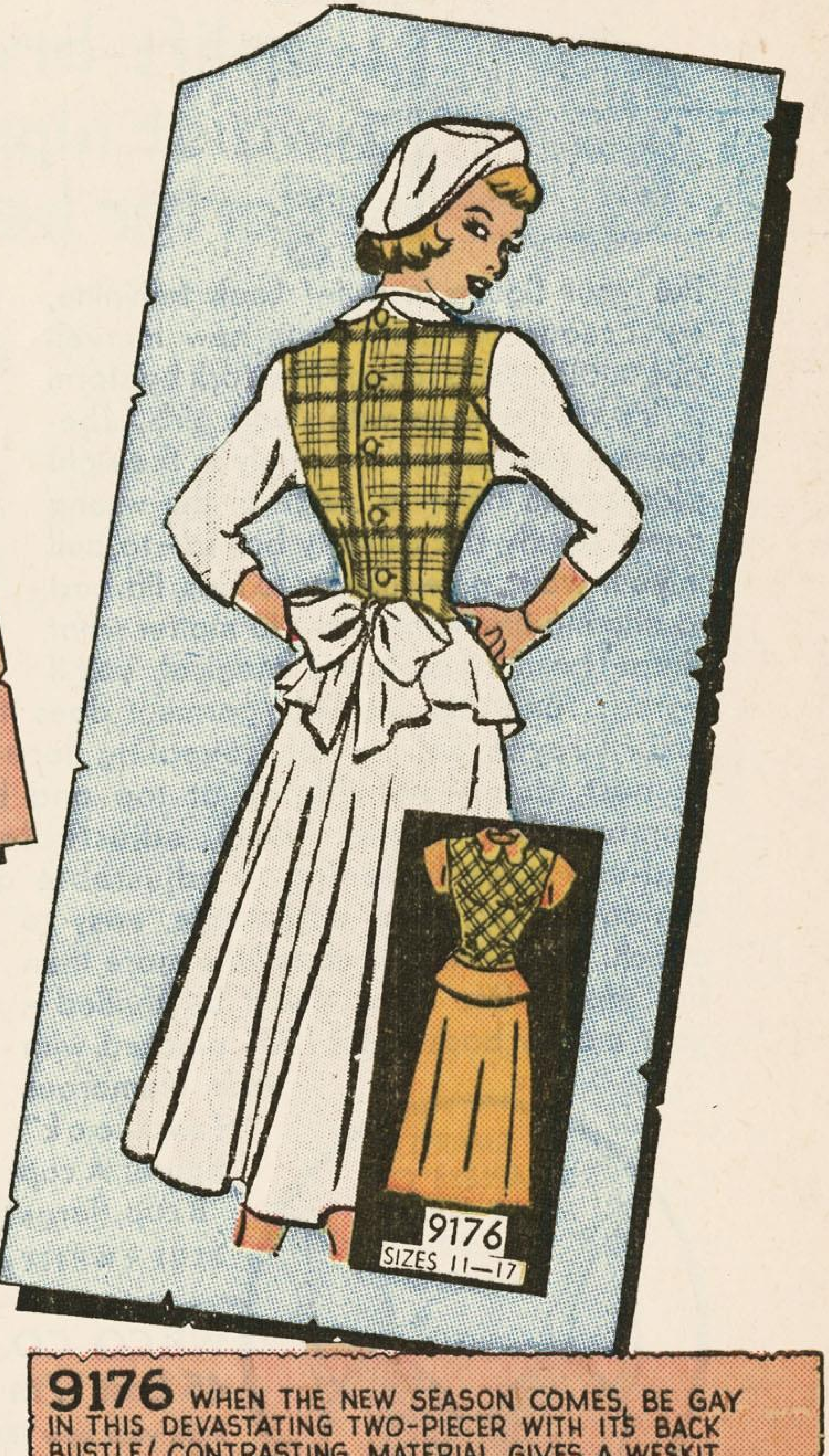

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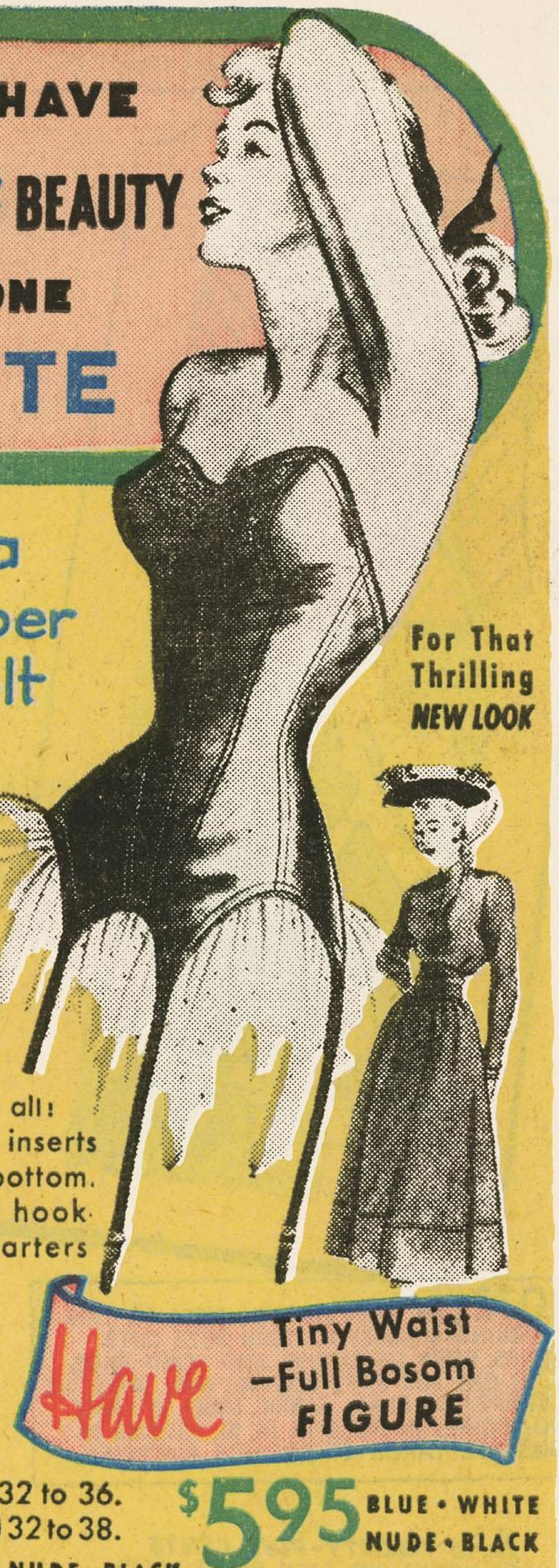
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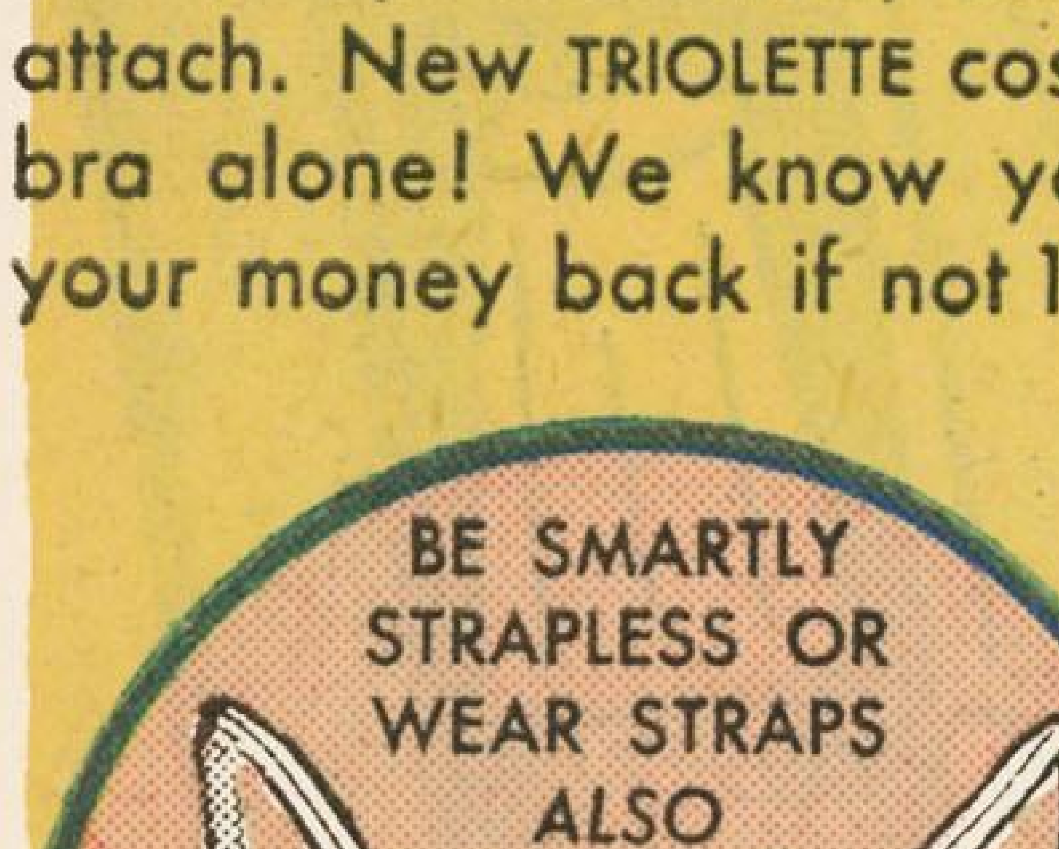
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